



SAPTARSHI

The Seven Supreme Sages





The route to your roots

Founder Editor: Anant Pai

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CYCLE OF TIME

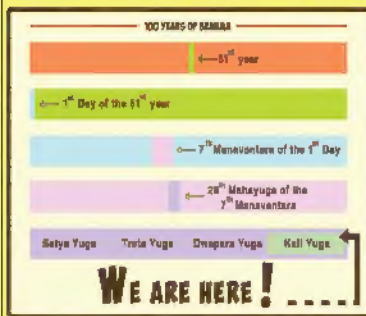
There are **24 HOURS** in a day and **365 DAYS** in a year, but that's just here on **EARTH**.

How long are **BRAHMA'S DAYS AND YEARS**, and how much does he accomplish as the creator of the universe?



BRAHMA

lives for 100 Brahma years, after which he is replaced by a new Brahma. Each Brahma year is made up of 360 Brahma days and nights called



KALPAS

KALPA DAY

Every Kalpa day, Brahma creates Svargaloka (Heaven), Bhuloka (Earth) and Patalsloka (the Netherworld).

KALPA NIGHT

Every Kalpa night, Brahma sleeps and there is pralaya, or complete destruction.

MANAVANTARAS

(One Manvantara is the lifespan of a **MANU**.)

MANU is the original ancestor of mankind.

EACH MANAVANTARA

Brahma creates

INDRA + Several Gods

MANU + 7 Rishis

ONE MANUYUGA

ONE MANUYUGA

4,320,000 YRS

Satya Yuga Treta Yuga Dwapara Yuga Kali Yuga

1,440,000 yrs

1,080,000 yrs

720,000 yrs

360,000 yrs



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ATRI AND ANASUYA

IN EVERY MANAVANTARA BRAHMA SELECTS SEVEN SAGES, OR SAPTARSHI, AS CARETAKERS OF THE WORLD.

SUMMONING THE POWER OF HIS MIND, HE CREATED FOR THE CURRENT MANAVANTARA, KASHYAPA, SAUTAMA, BHARADWAJA, VISHVAMITRA, JAMADAGNI, VASISHTHA AND ATRI.



MANASAPUTRA* YOUR DUTY IS TO MAKE SURE THERE IS LAW AND ORDER ON EARTH DURING THE VAIVASVATA MANAVANTARA.



ATRI, YOU WILL BE KNOWN FOR YOUR HONESTY AND PIETY.

LORD, I WILL DEVOTE MYSELF COMPLETELY TO THE WELFARE OF MANKIND.



ATRI MARRIED ANASUYA, THE DAUGHTER OF SAGE KARDAMA.

MAY YOU BOTH LIVE IN HARMONY.

ATRI AND ANASUYA BUILT AN ASHRAM AND GURUKUL** IN THE TRANQUIL CHITRAKOOT** MOUNTAINS, ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER PAYASWINI.

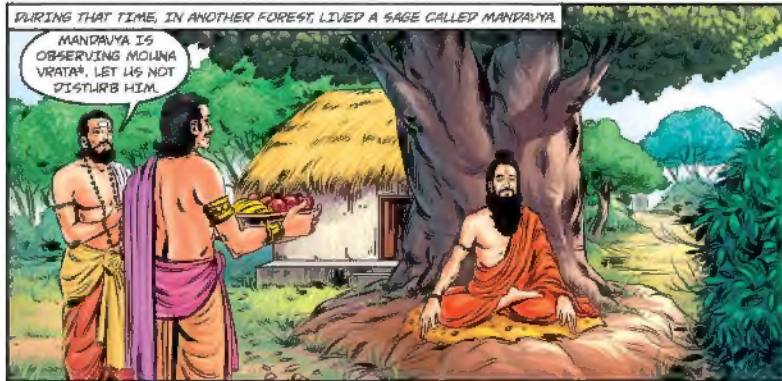


WE ARE SO LUCKY TO BE TAUGHT THE VEDAS BY ONE SO LEARNED AS ATRI.

*MIND-BORN SONS
**PLACE OF LEARNING/SCHOOL

**CHITRAKOOT IS IN MODERN-DAY UTTAR PRADESH.



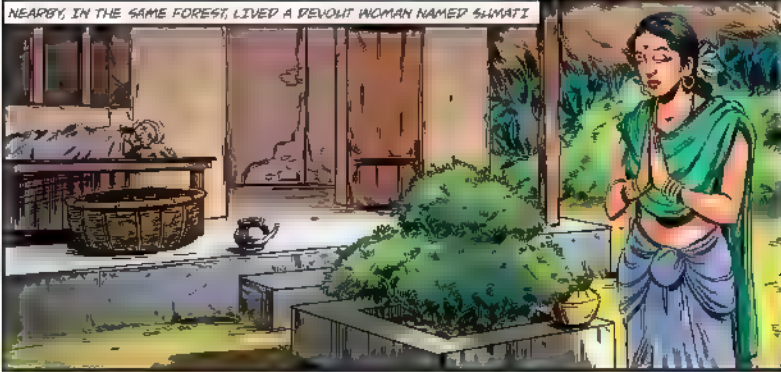


*A VOW OF SILENCE FOR A PARTICULAR PERIOD OF TIME

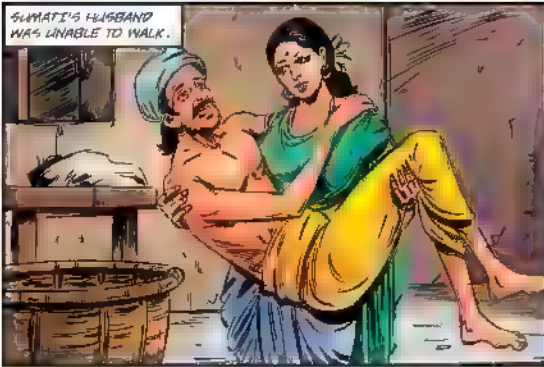




NEARBY, IN THE SAME FOREST, LIVED A DEVOUT WOMAN NAMED SUMATI

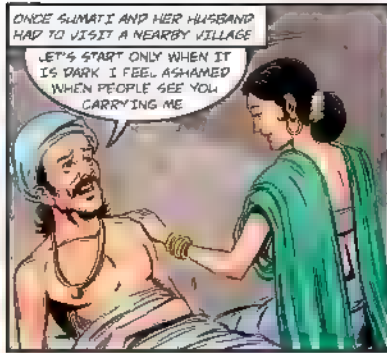


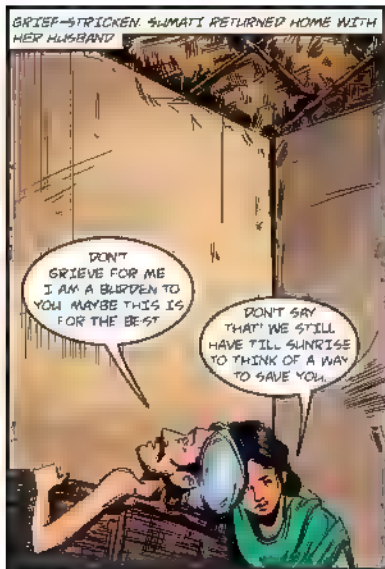
SUMATI'S HUSBAND WAS UNABLE TO WALK.

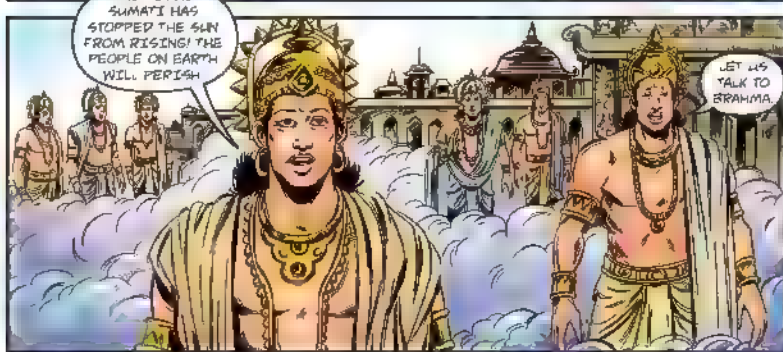
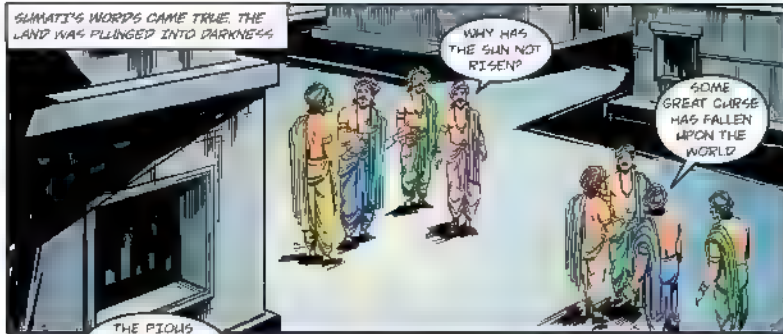


AND SO SHE CARRIED HIM IN A BASKET WHEREVER SHE WENT



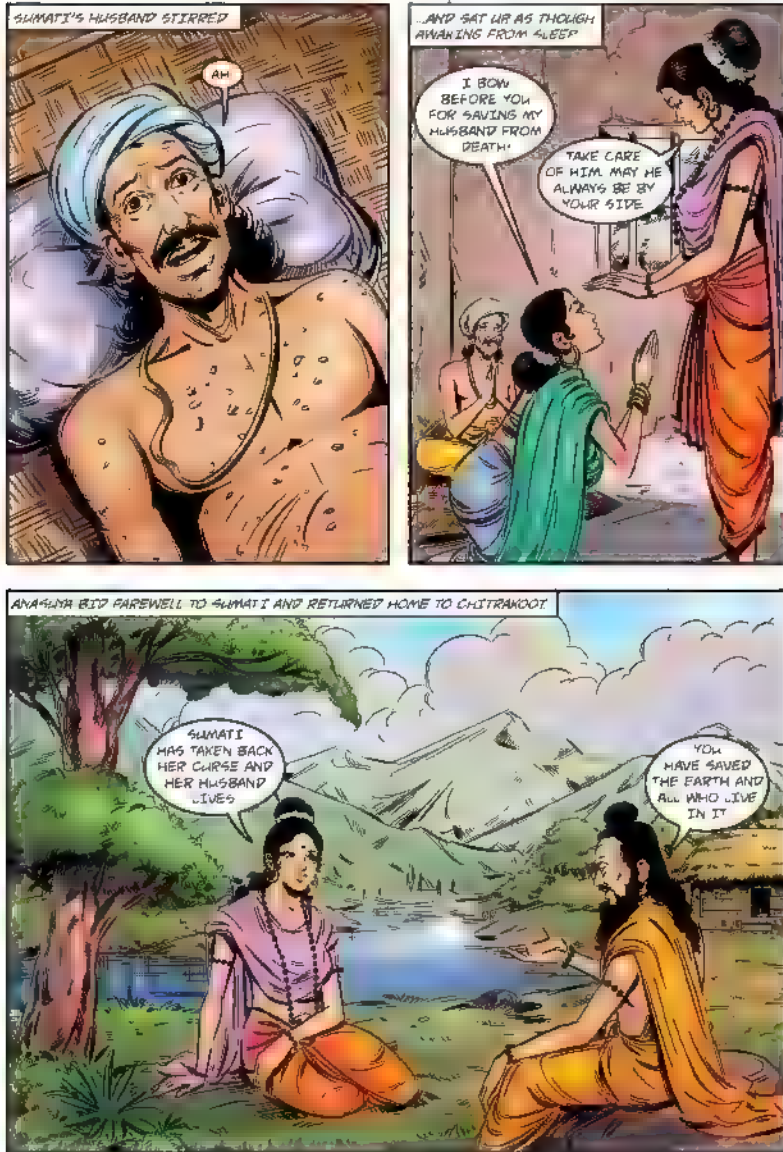


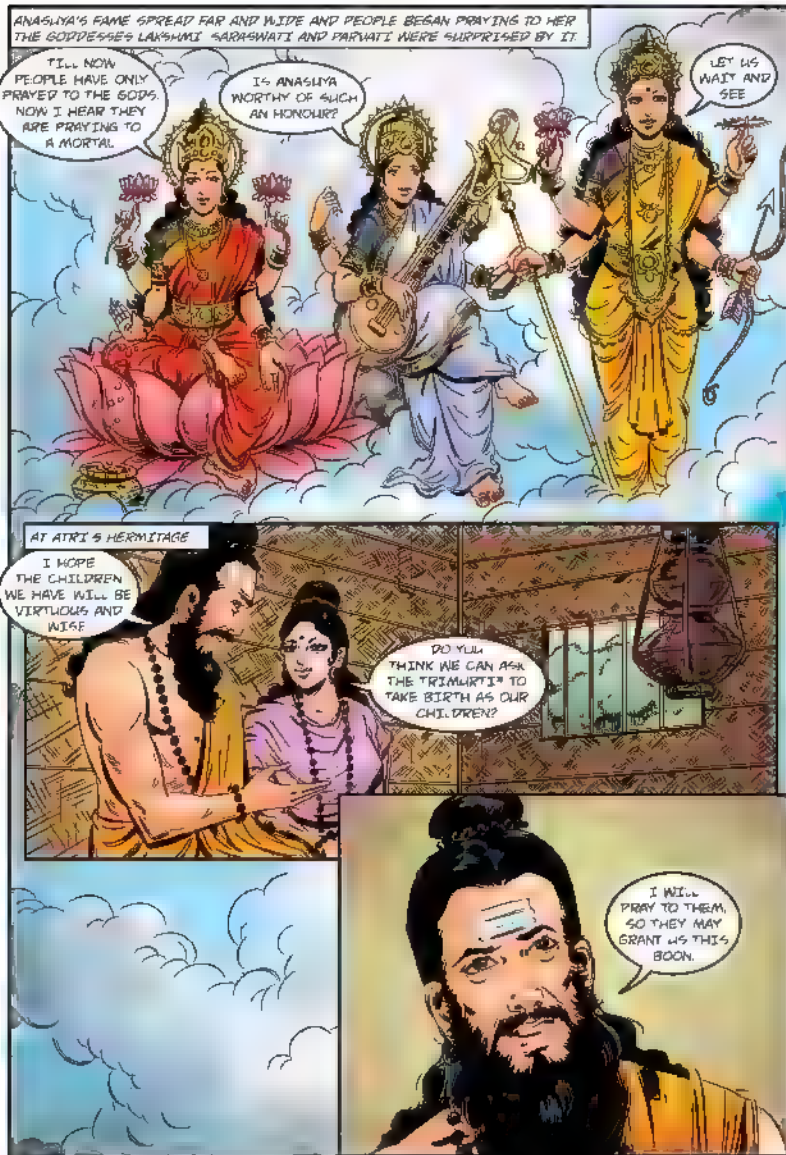




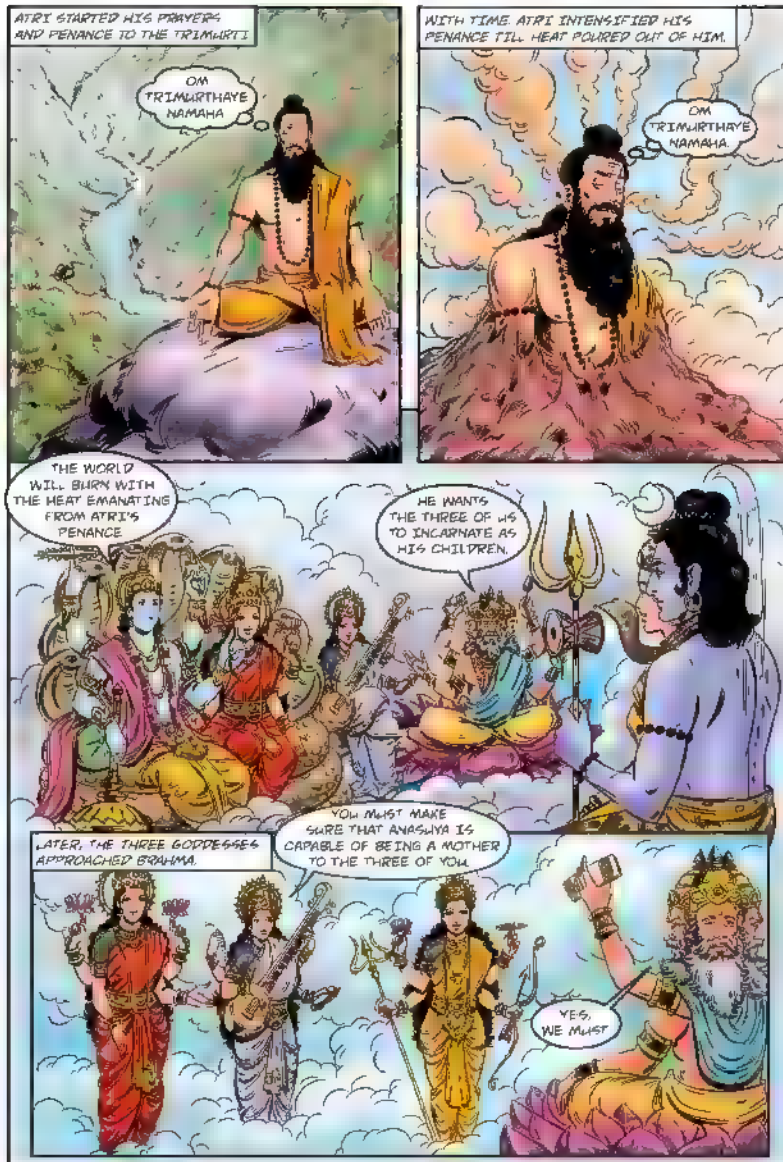


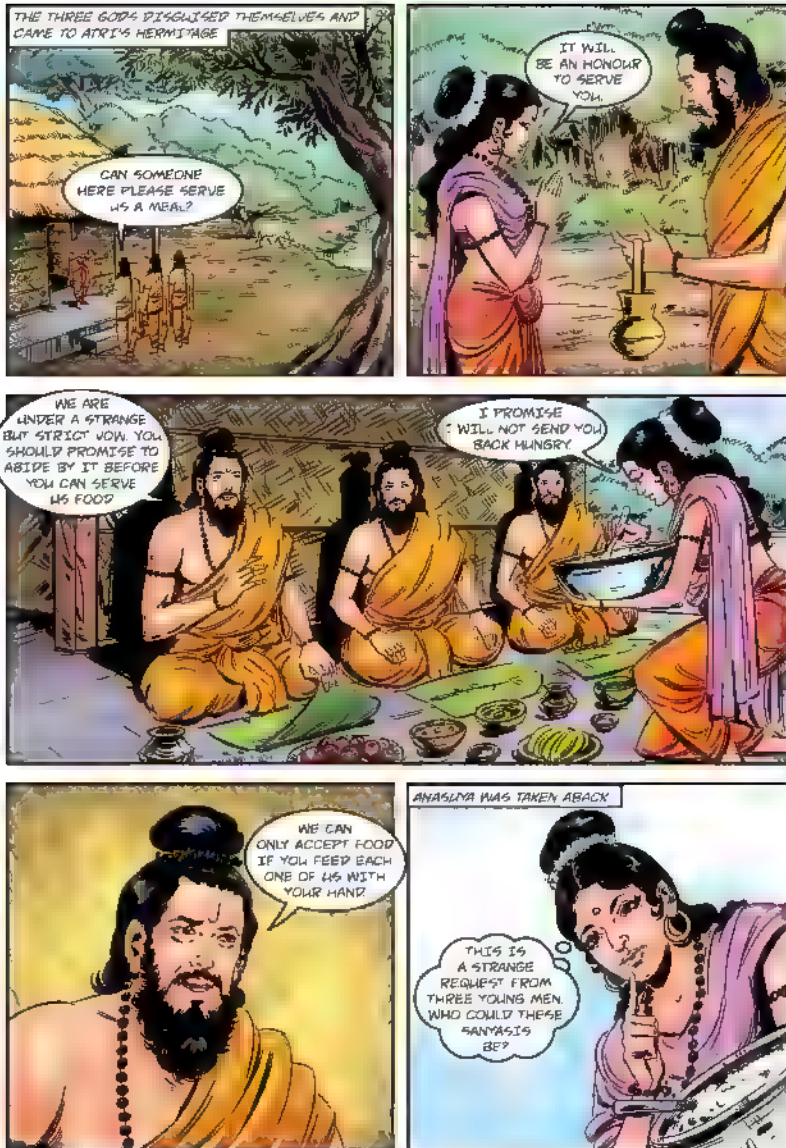




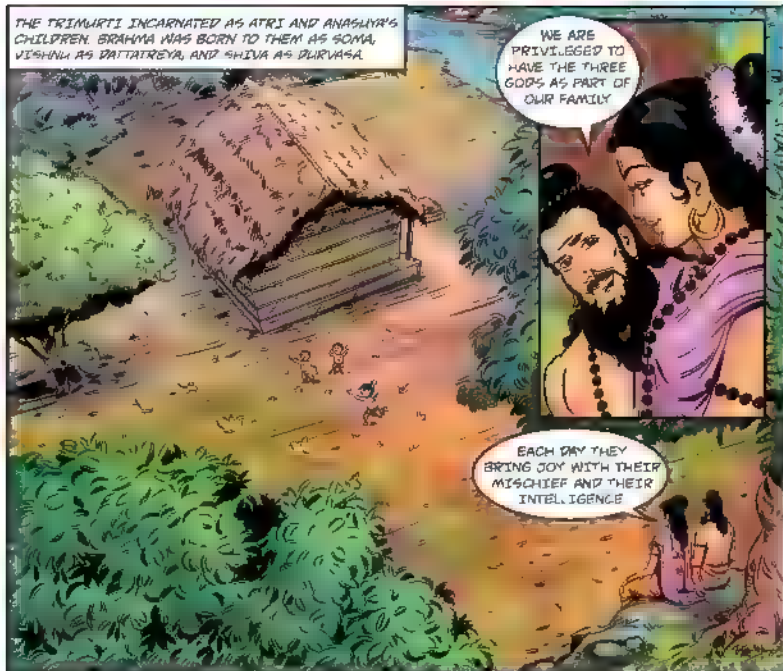


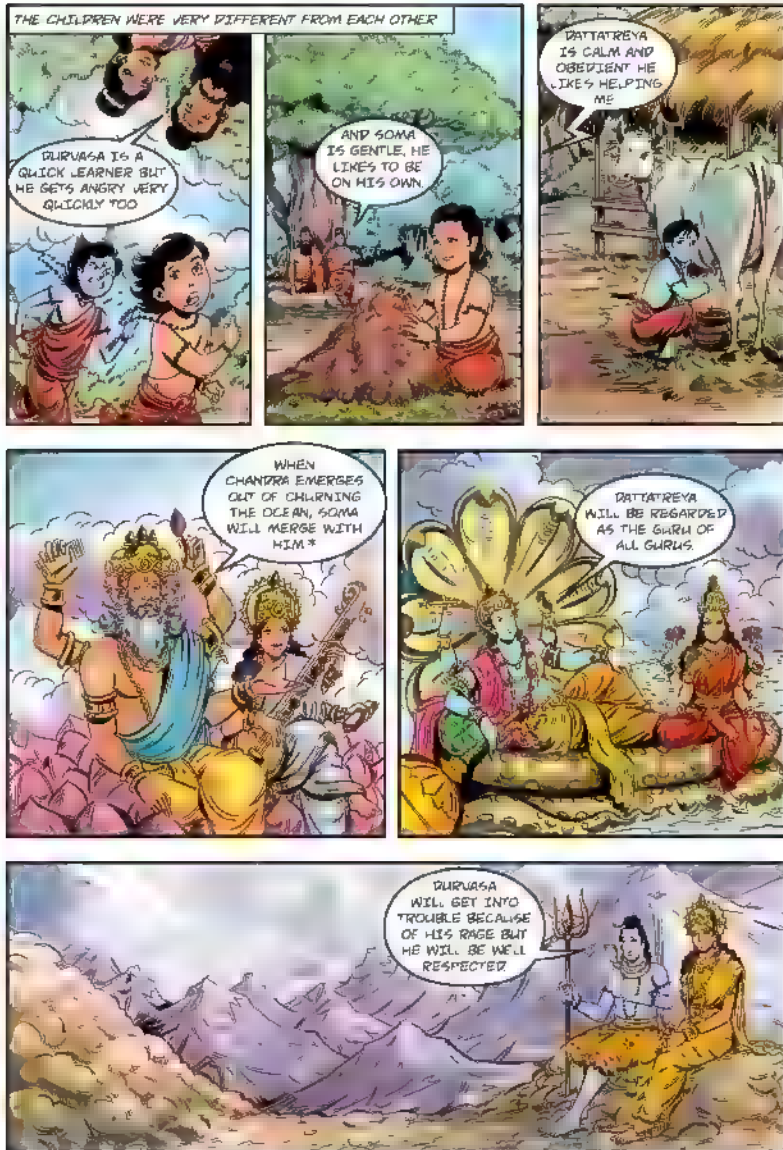
*BRAHMA, VISHNU AND SHIVA TOGETHER ARE KNOWN AS TRIMURTI



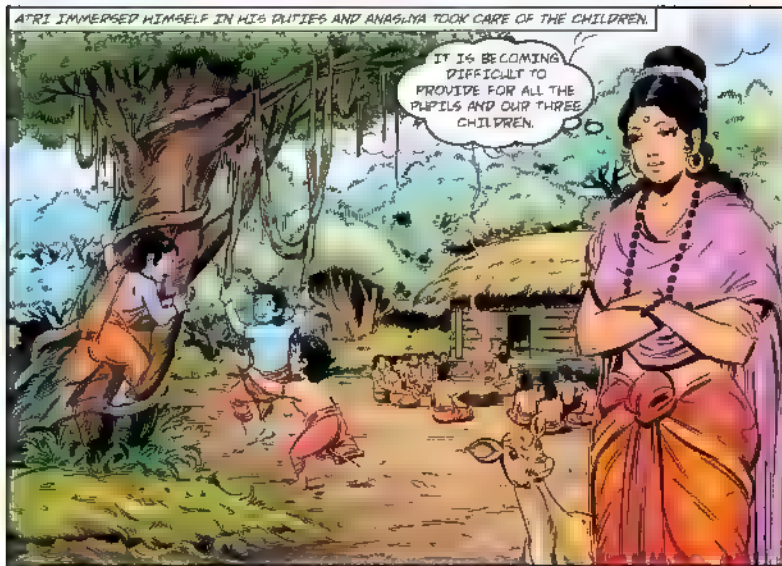




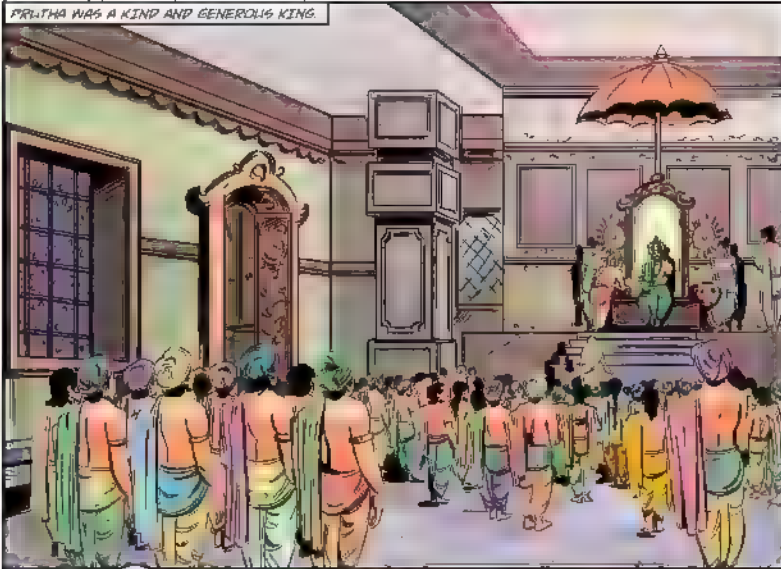




*CHANDRA WAS BORN FROM THE CHURNING OF THE OCEAN, WHILE SOMA ALSO CALLED CHANDRA IS THE SON OF ATRI. SOMA MERGES WITH CHANDRA TO BECOME ONE



PRITHA WAS A KIND AND GENEROUS KING.



IT IS TIME
I PERFORMED
THE ASHNAMEDEHA
YAGYA. BUT INDRA*
WILL CERTAINLY
TRY TO
HAMPER IT.



I AM HERE
TO ASK YOU FOR
A FAVOUR, O
KING.

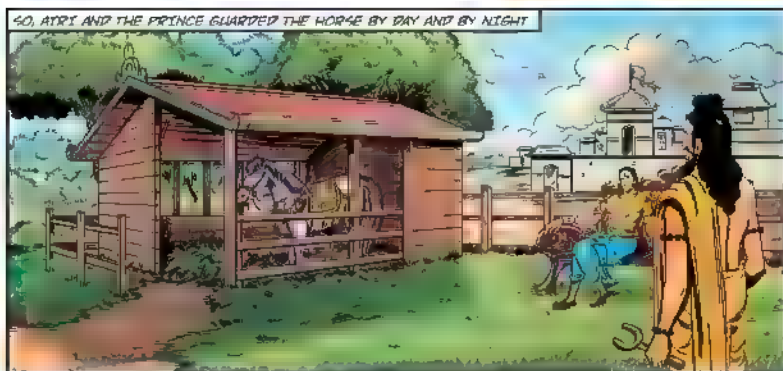
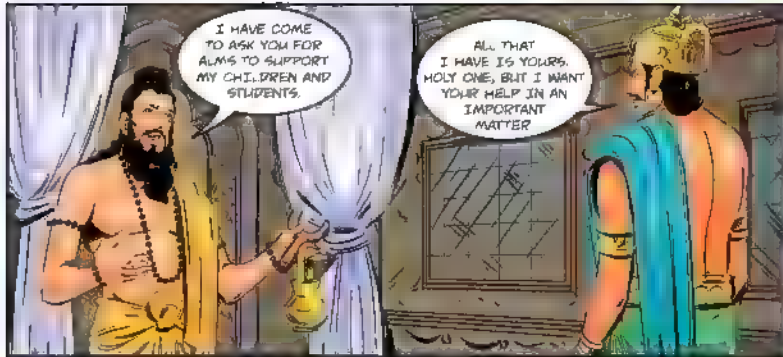


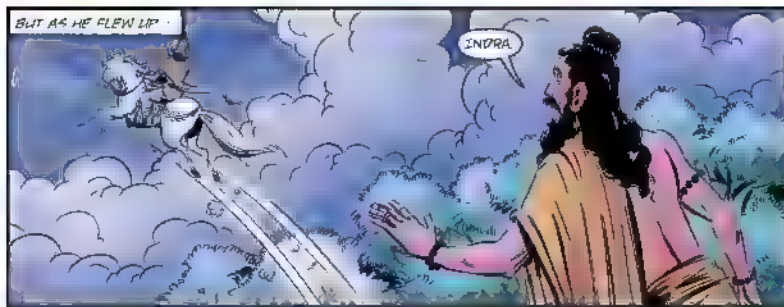
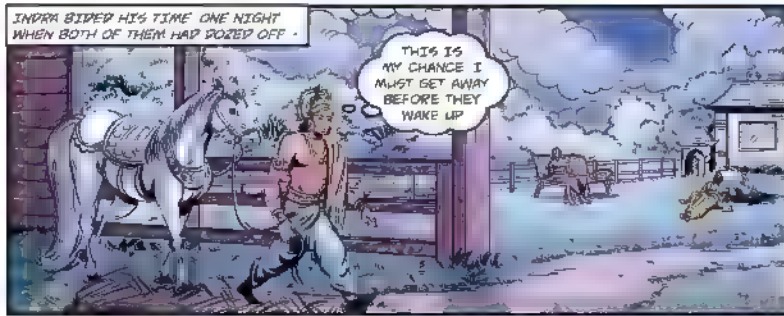
NEXT DAY ATRI CAME TO PRITHA'S COURT.

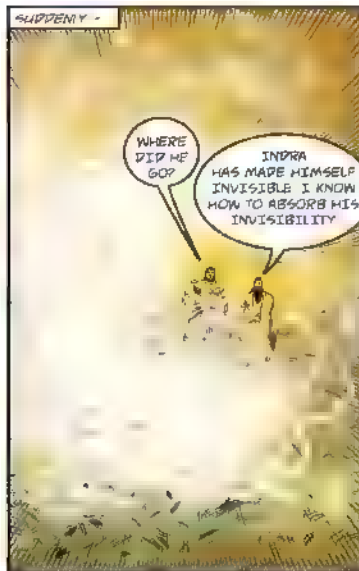
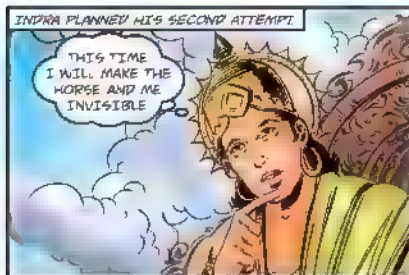
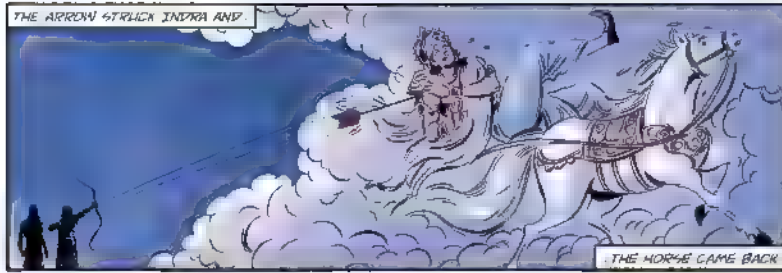
I AM
BLESSED THAT
A GREAT SAGE
LIKE YOU HAS
GRACED MY
PALACE.

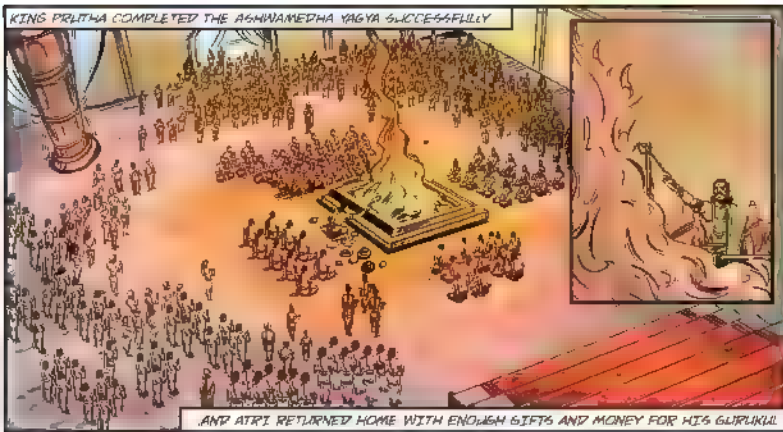
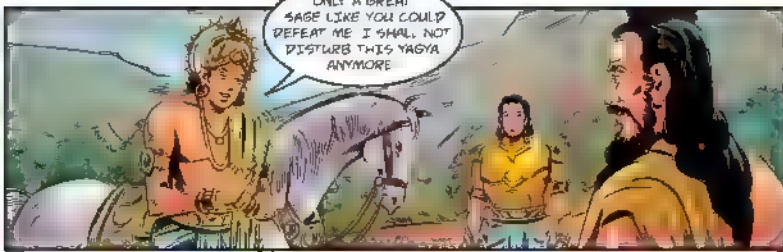
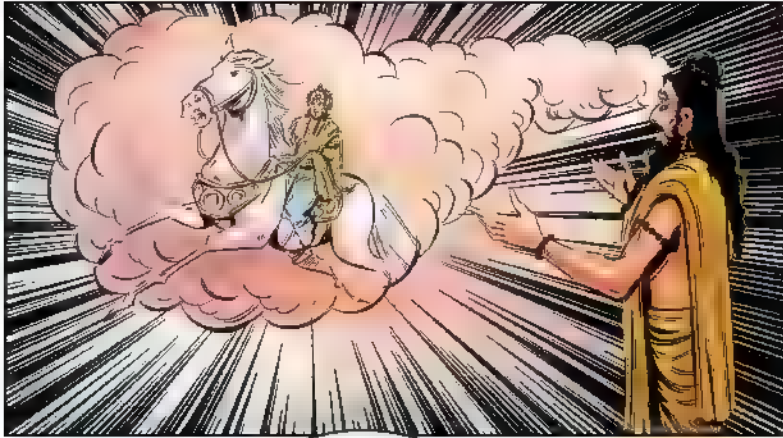
GOD BLESS
YOU WITH MORE
PROSPERITY AND
POWER.

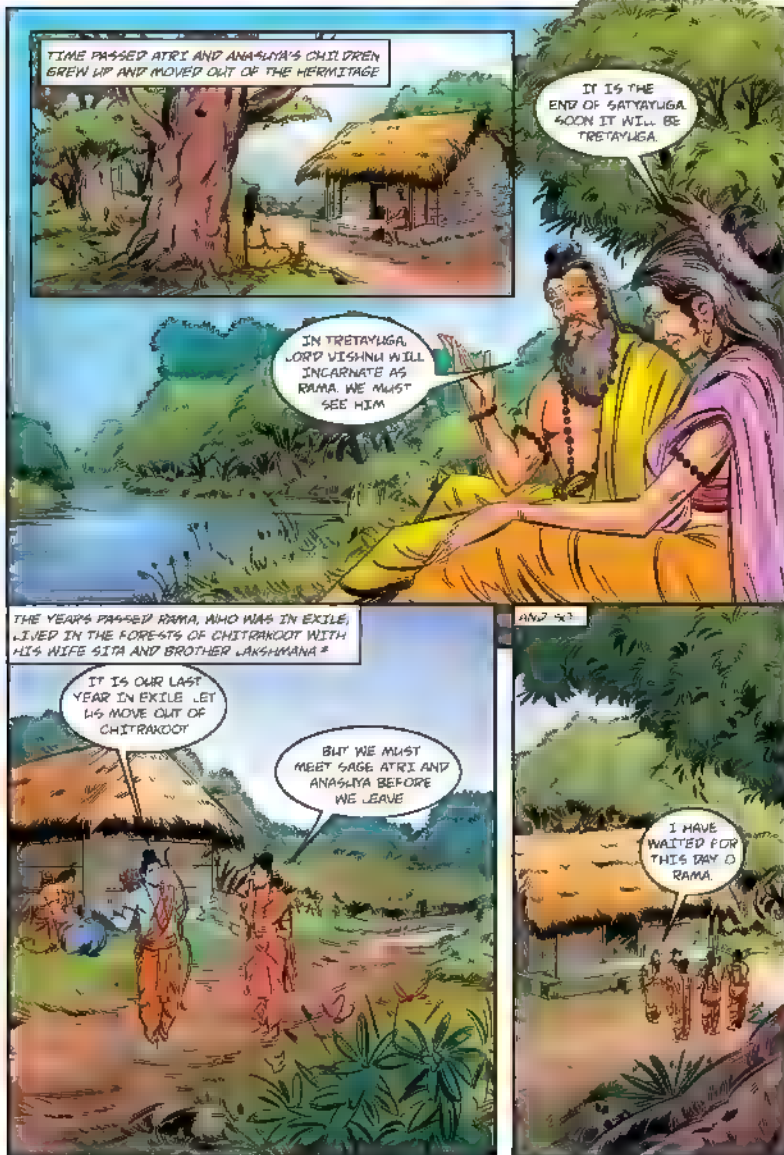
*THOSE WHO DID A HUNDRED ASHNAMEDEHA YAGYAS WOULD BECOME THE NEXT LORD OF GODS. SO INDRA, THE LORD OF GODS TRIED TO STOP ANYONE FROM COMPLETING THAT NUMBER.



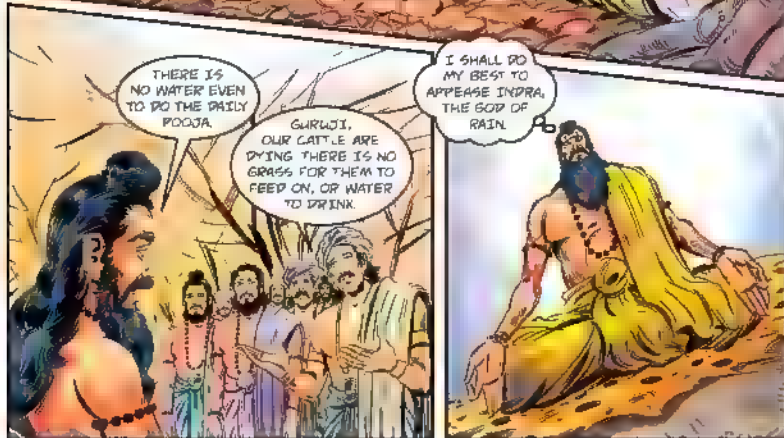
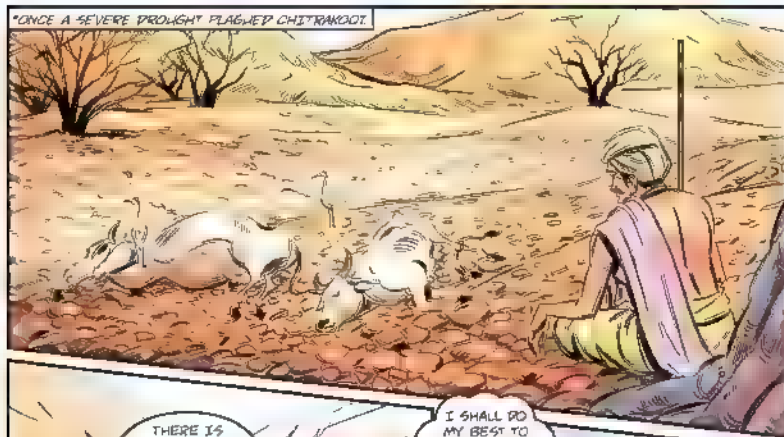
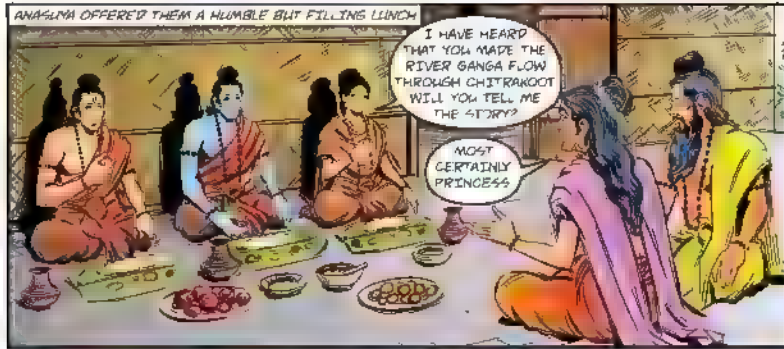


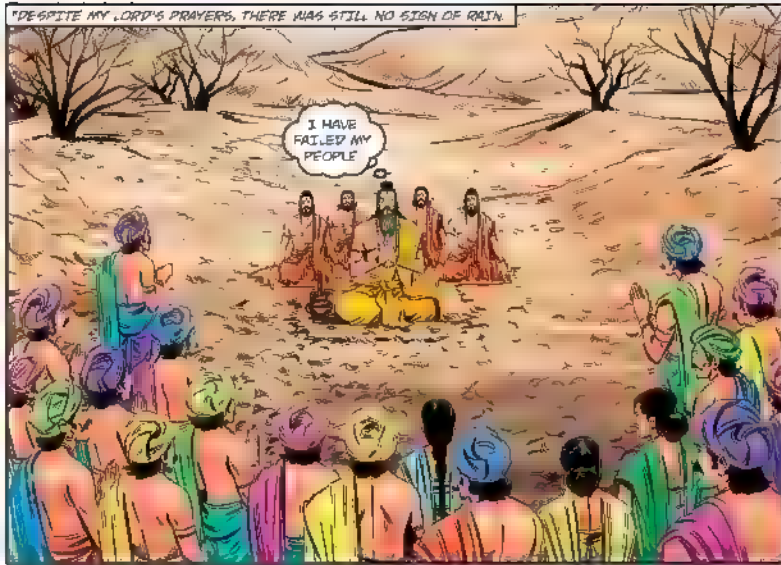




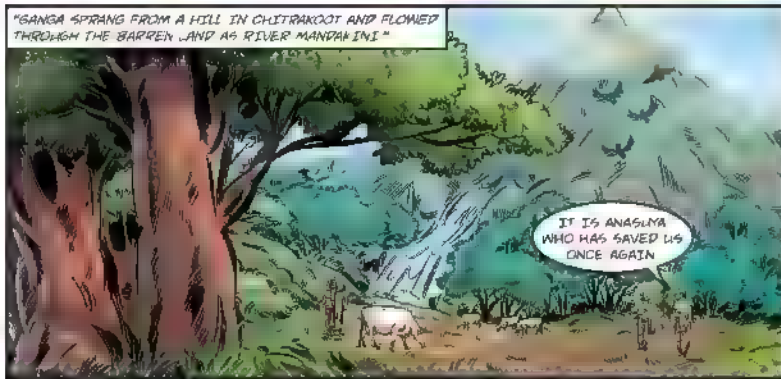


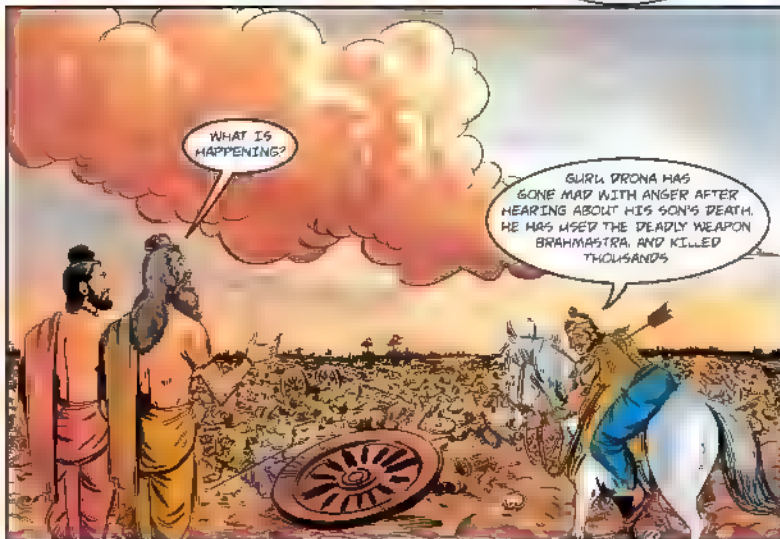
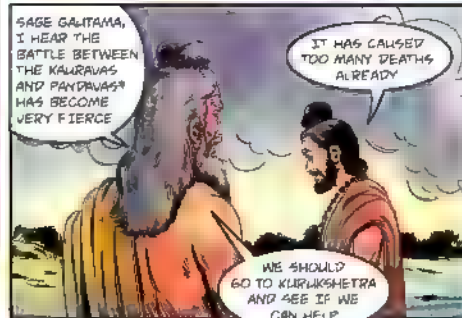
*RAMA WAS IN EXILE FOR 14 YEARS WITH LAKSHMANA AND SITA.



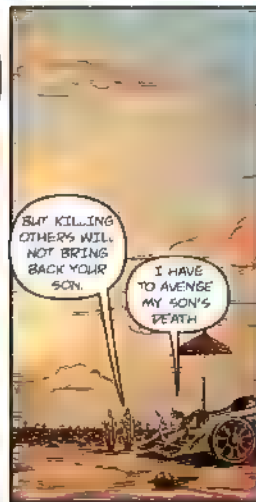
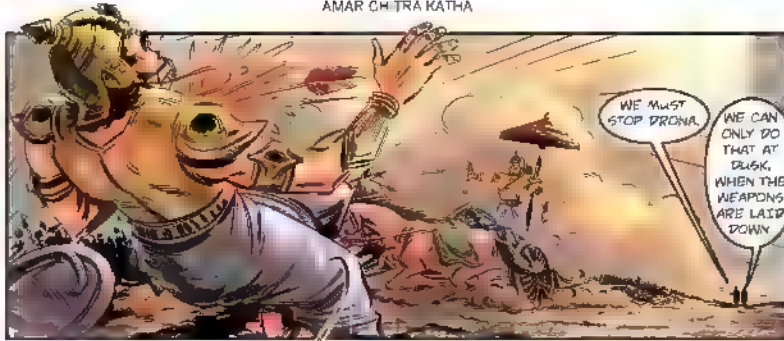


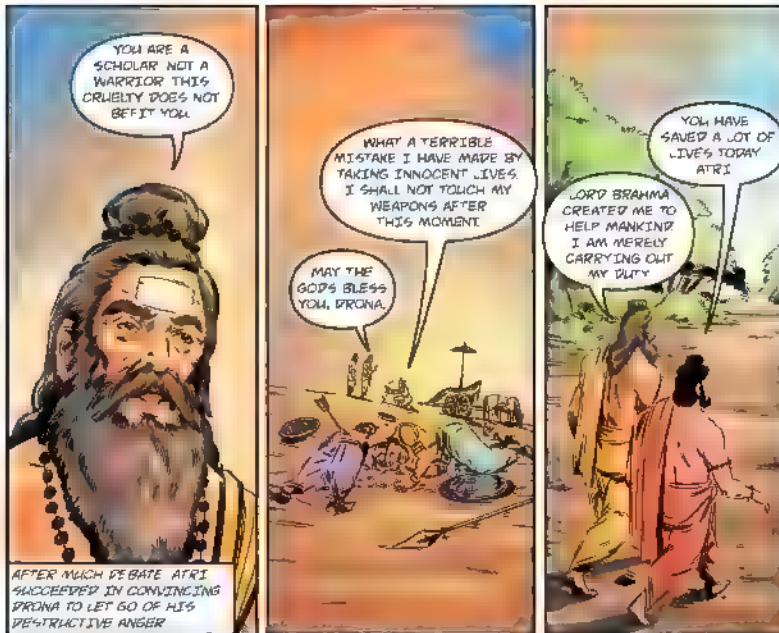
*GANGA HAD INCARNATED ON EARTH AS A HOLY RIVER





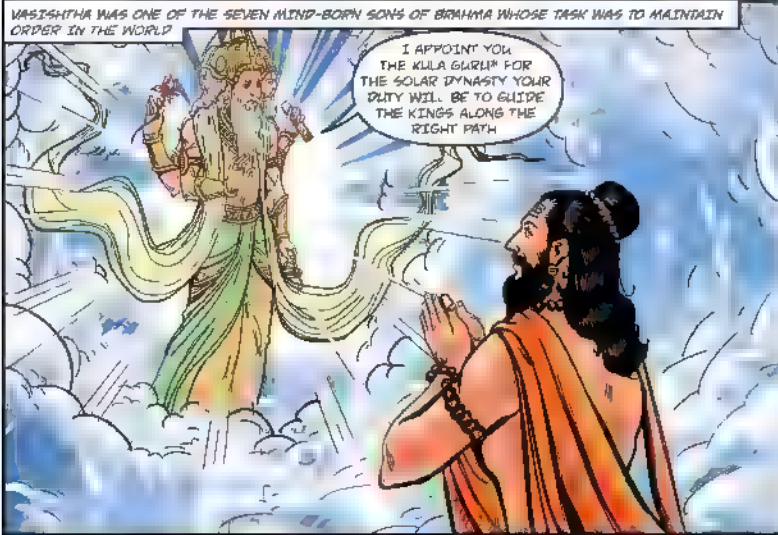
*THE MAHABHARATA WAR WAS FOUGHT BETWEEN THE KAURAVAS AND PANDAVAS AT KURUKSHETRA.





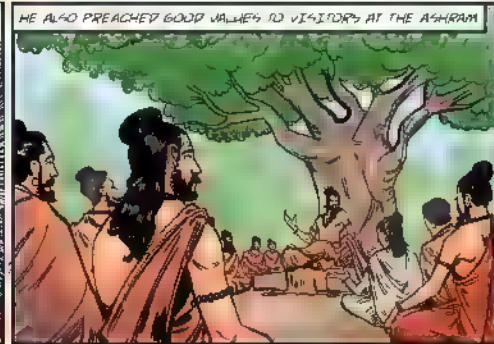
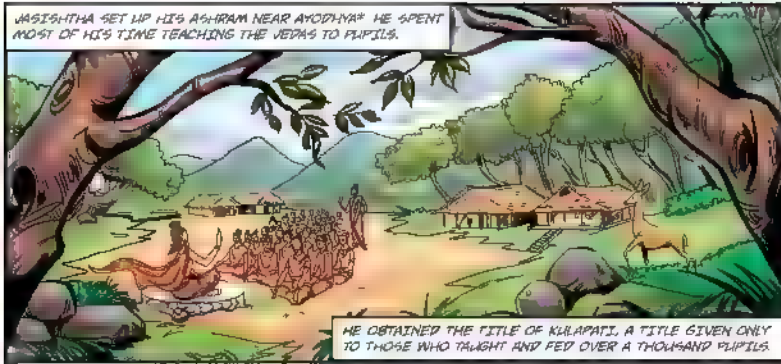
*THE FORMATION KNOWN AS THE SAPTARSHI MANDAL IN INDIA, IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE BIG DIPPER

VASISHTHA AND ARUNDHATI

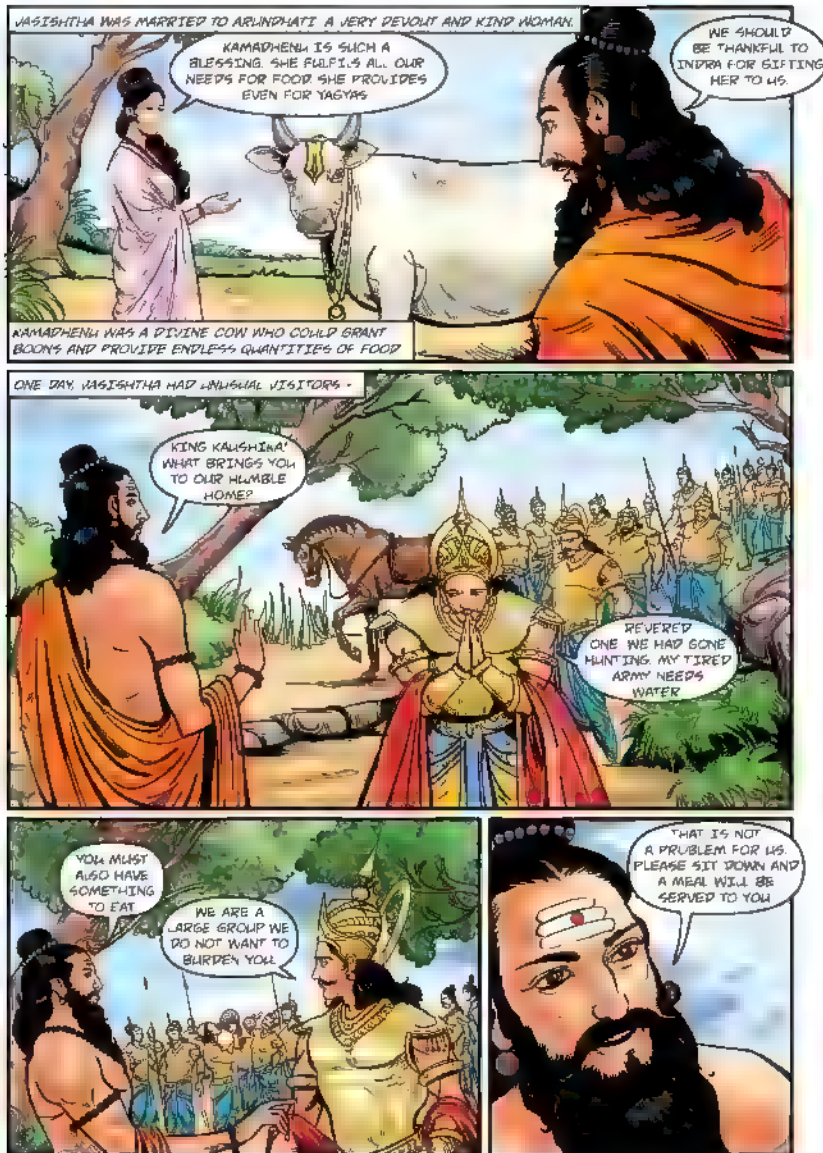


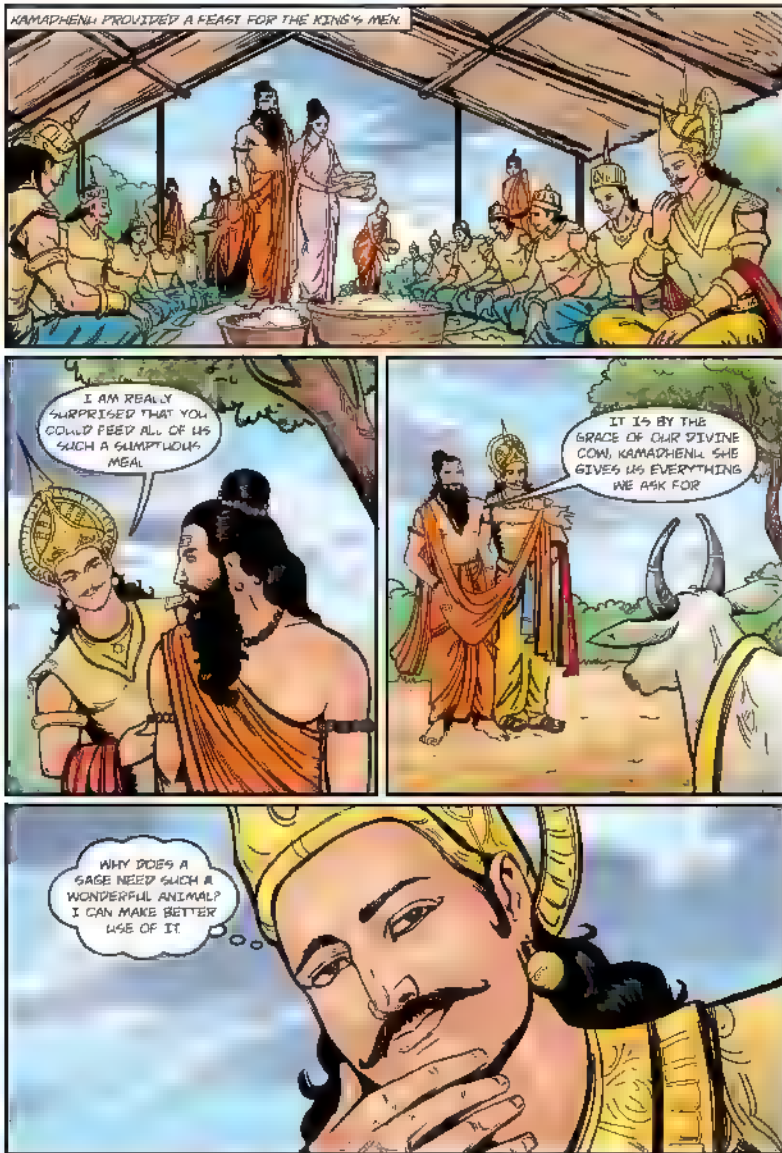
*CHIEF ADVISOR TO THE KING

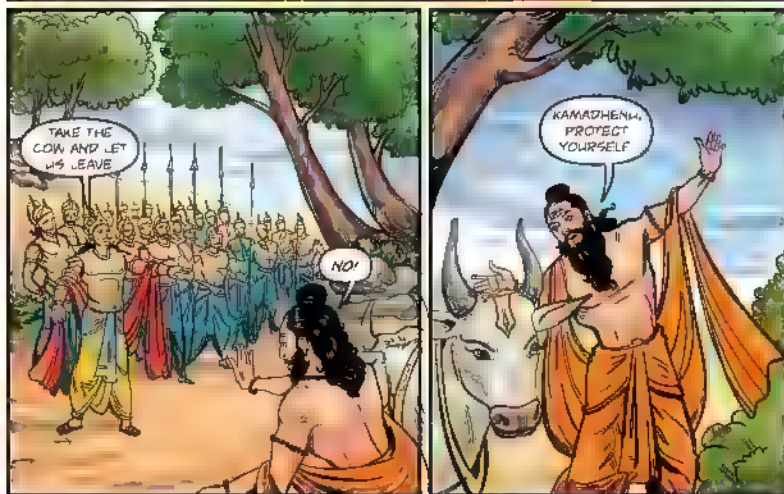
VASISHTHA AND ARUNDHATI

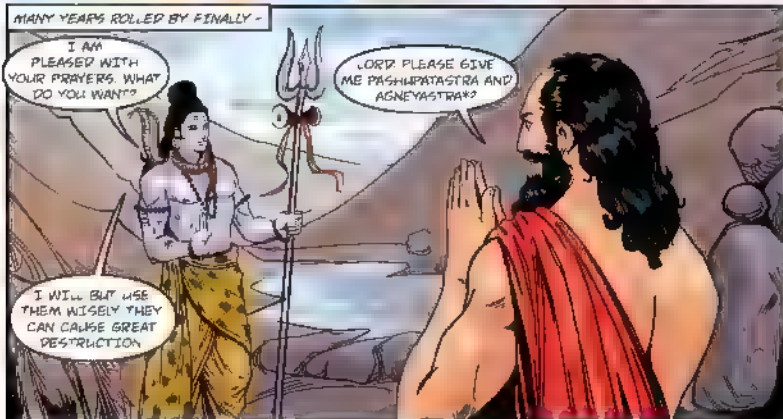
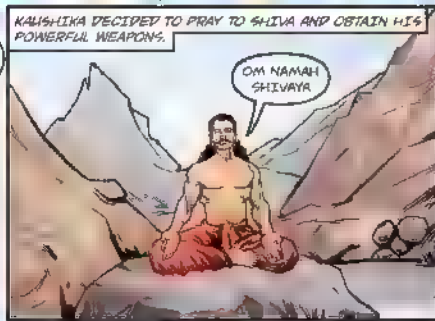
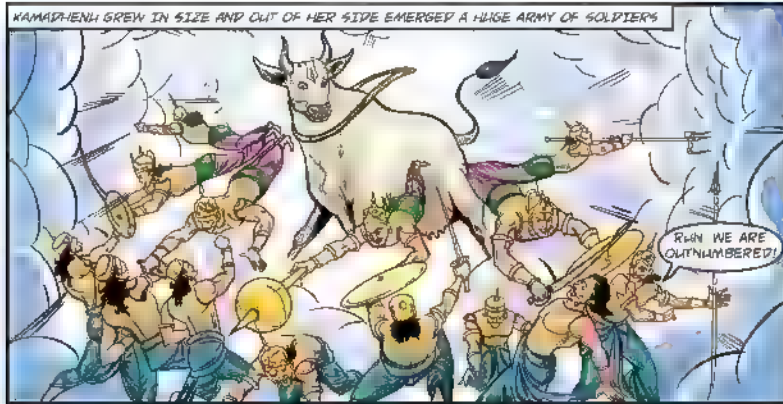


*THE KINGS OF THE SOLAR DYNASTY RULED THE KOSALA KINGDOM WITH AYODHYA AS THEIR CAPITAL





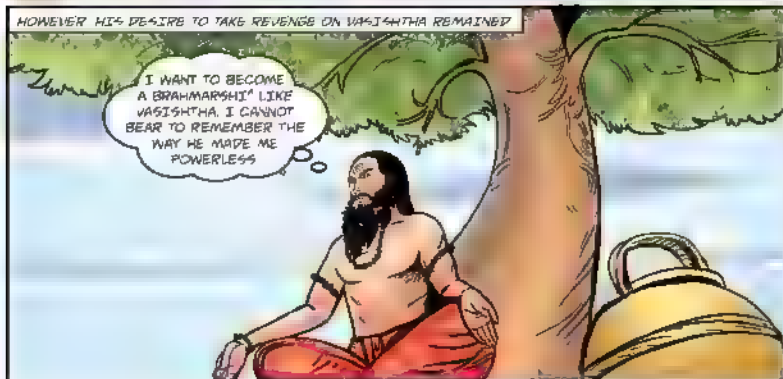
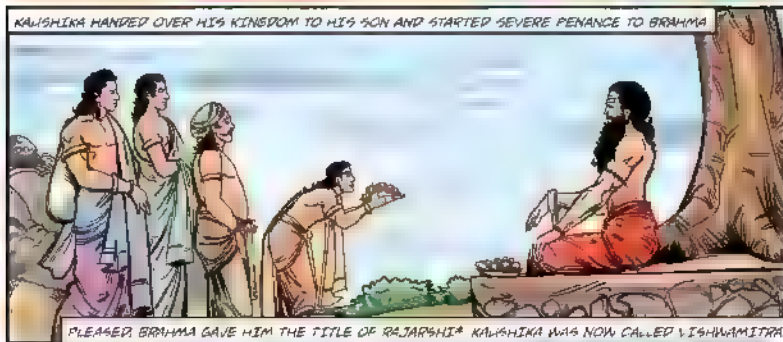




*WEAPONS INVOKED BY CHANTING VERSES

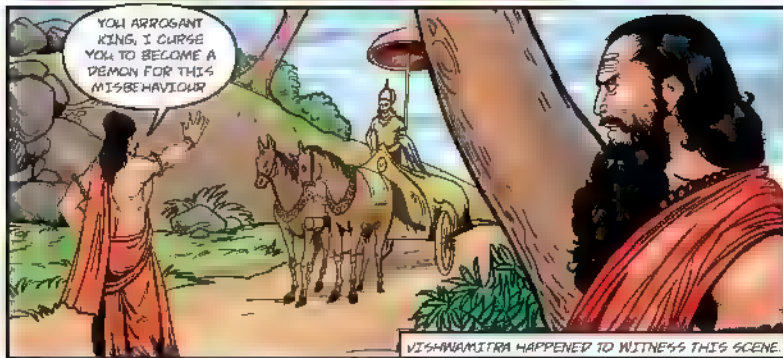
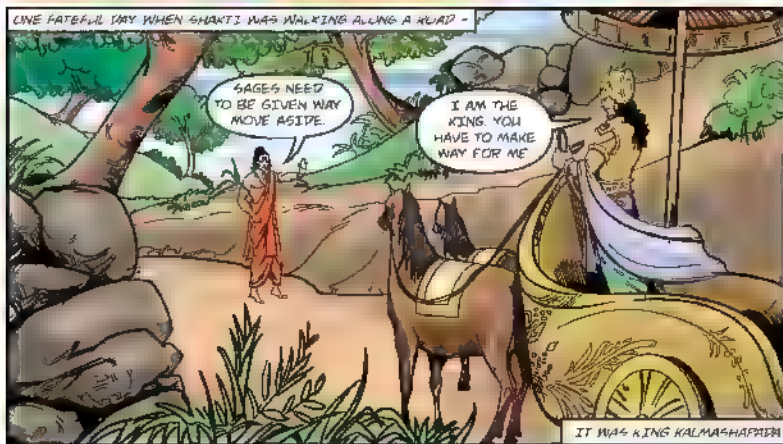
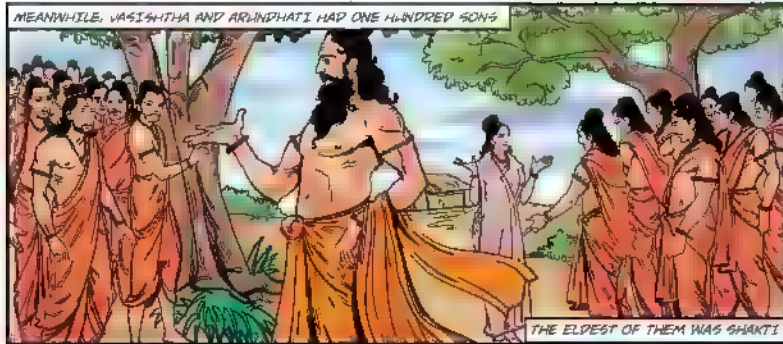


*BAMBOO ROD SYMBOLISING
BRAHMA'S STAFF



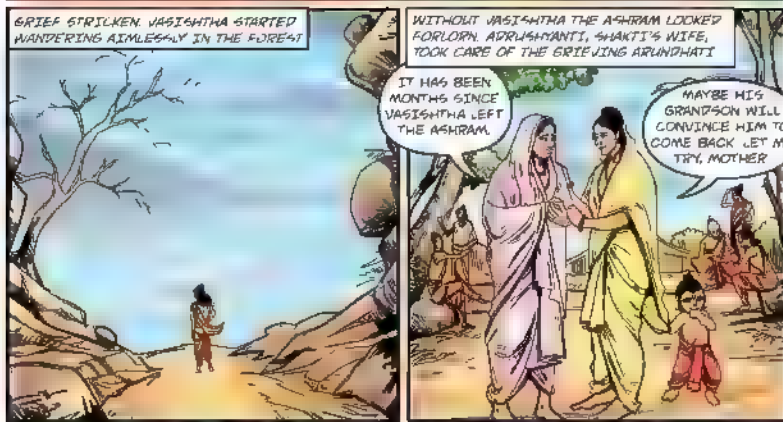
*A KING WHO RENOUNCES HIS THRONE TO BECOME A SAGE

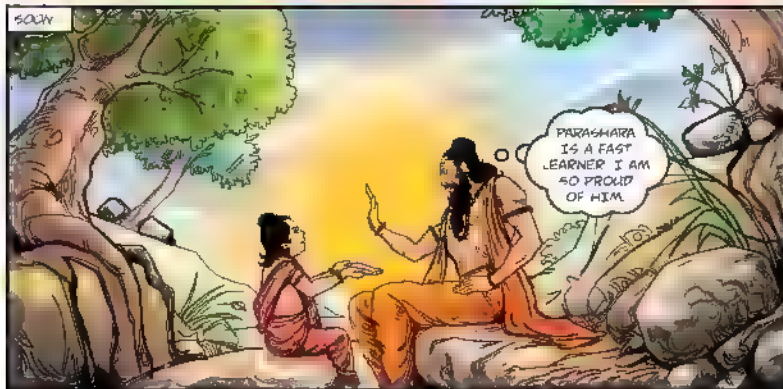
*THE HIGHEST STATUS A SAGE CAN ACHIEVE

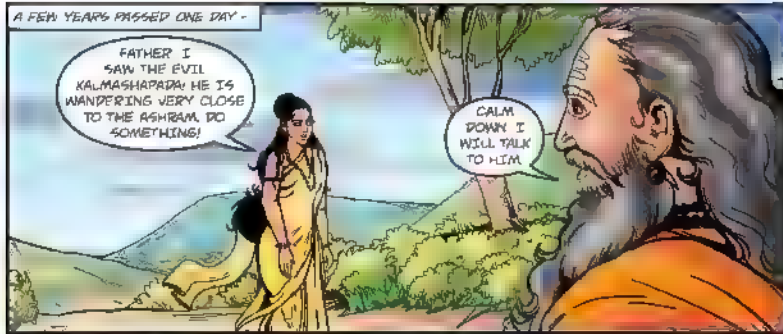


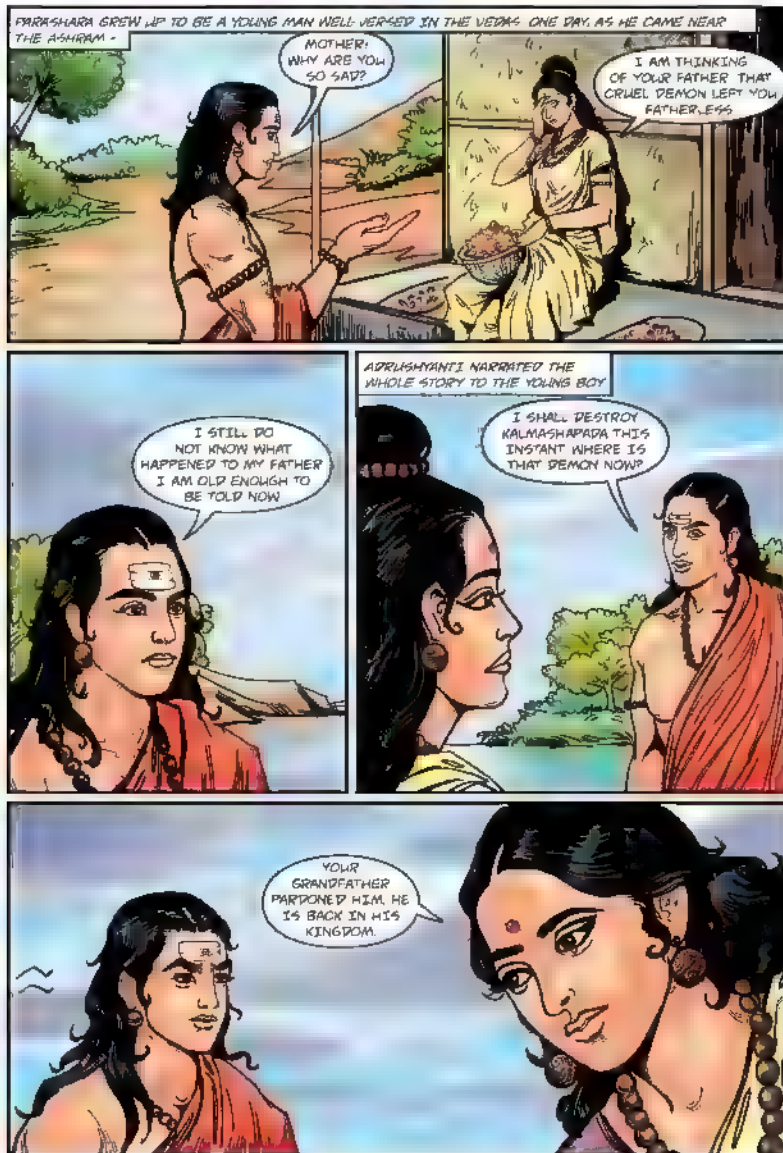




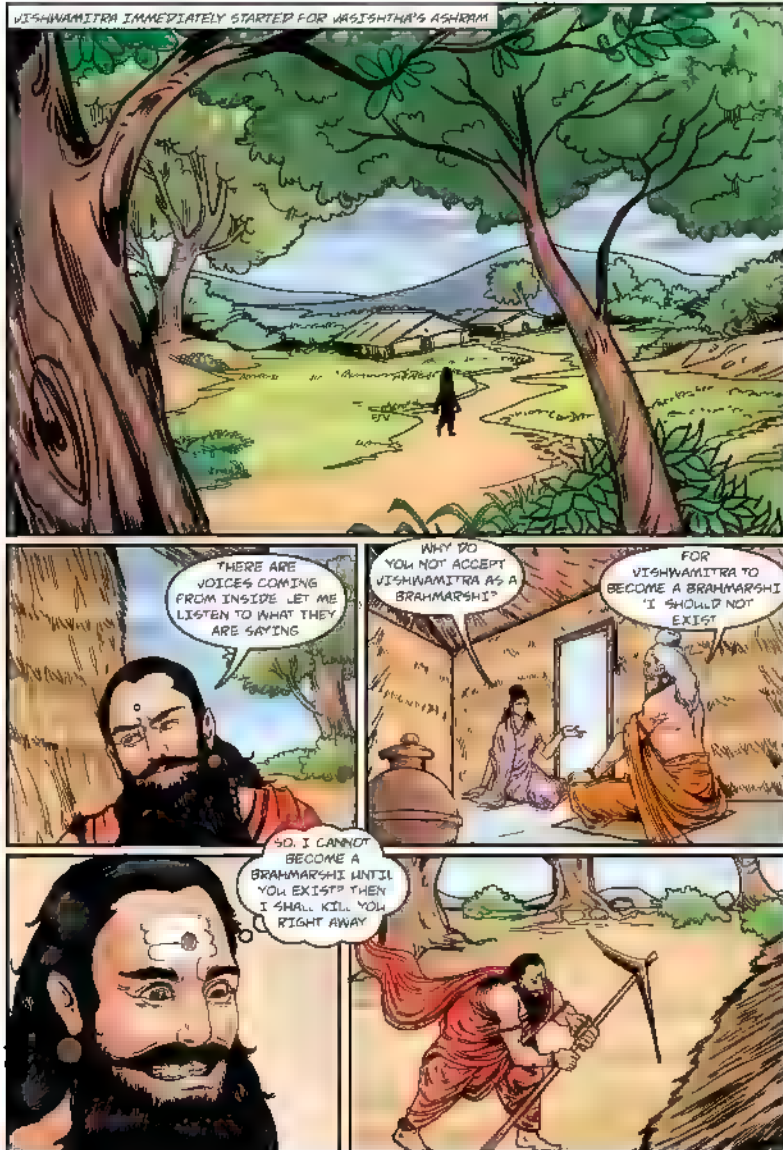


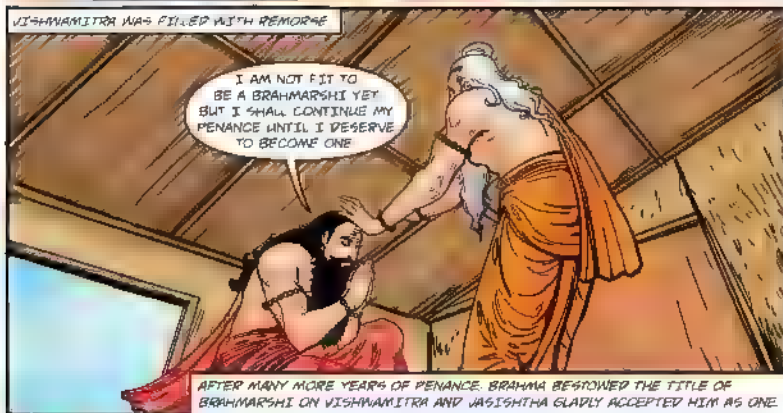




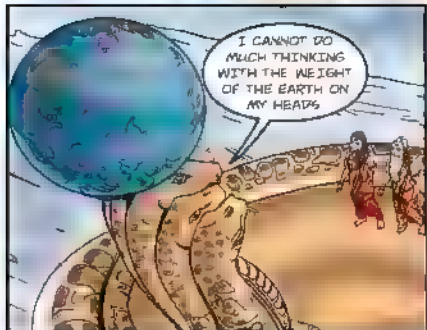
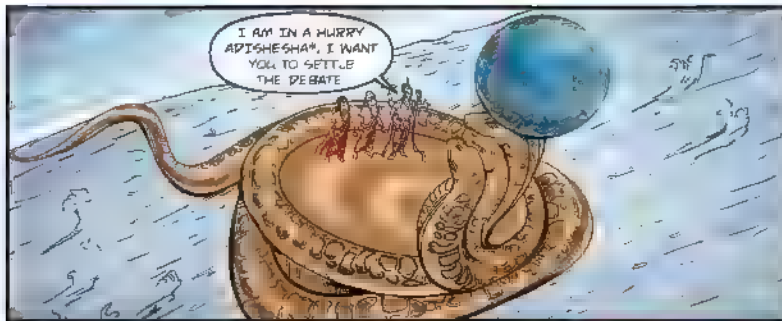










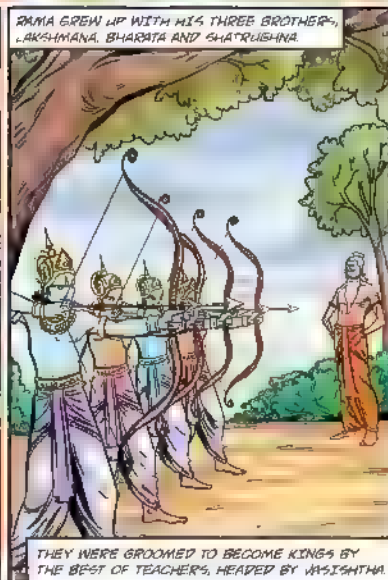
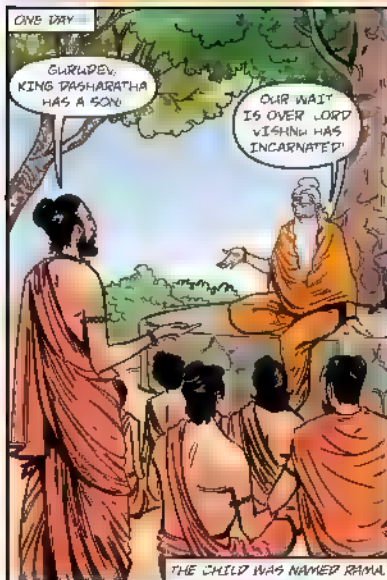
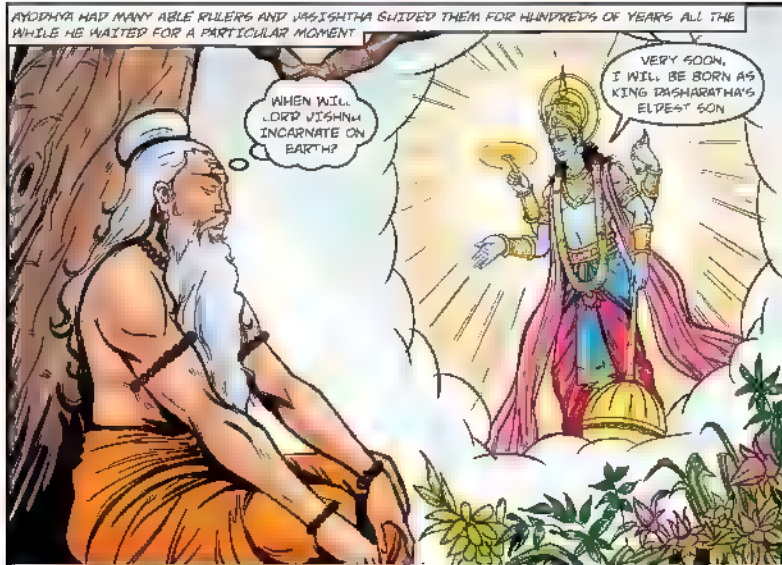


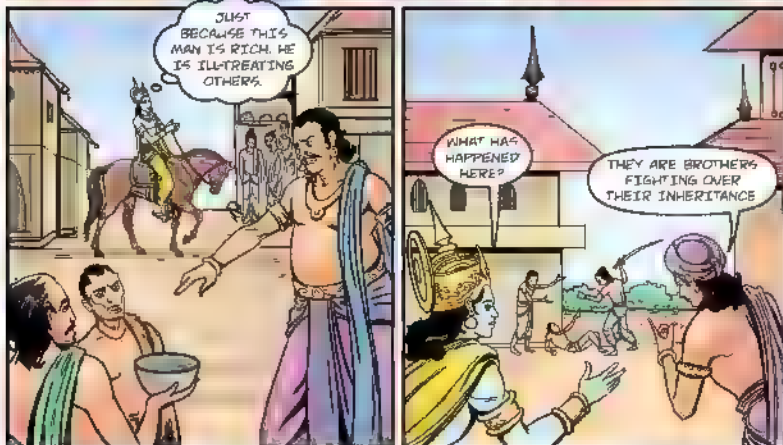
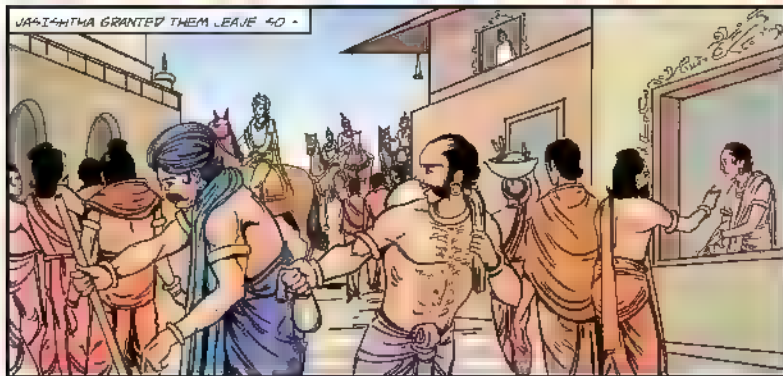
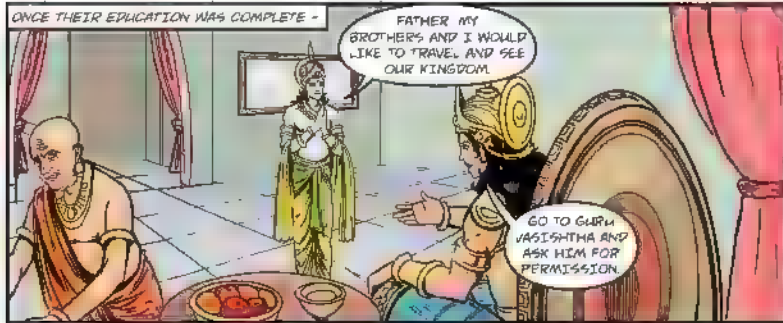
VISHNAMITRA VOLUNTEERED FIRST

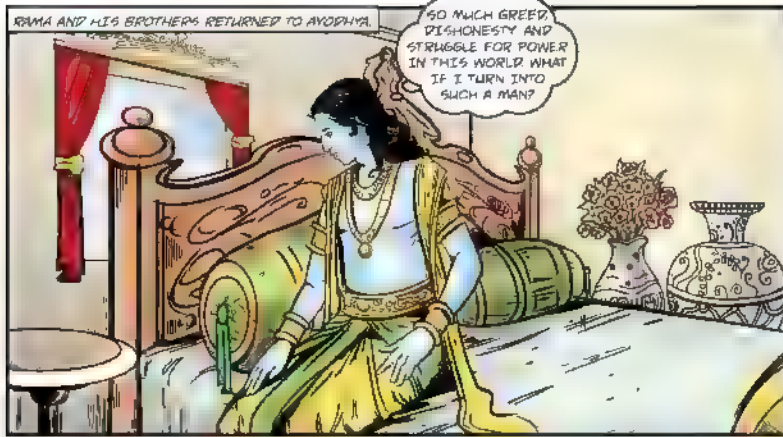


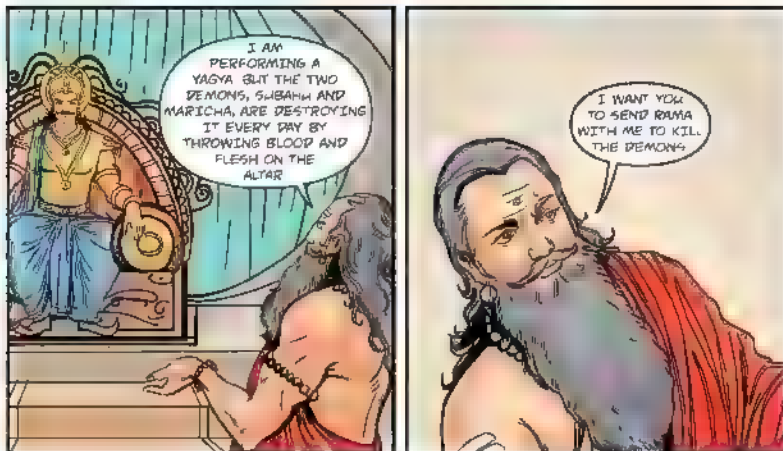
*ADISHESHA IS THE KING OF SERPENTS AND VISHNU RESTS ON HIM AS HE FLOATS ON THE OCEAN OF MILK HE ALSO CARRIES THE EARTH ON HIS HEADS.

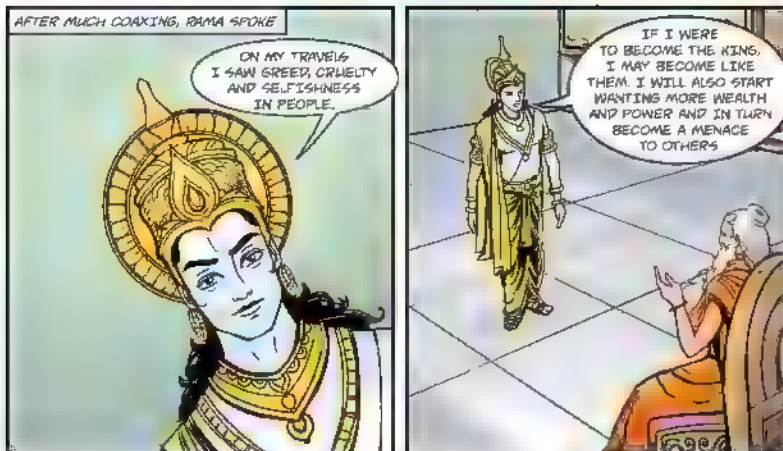
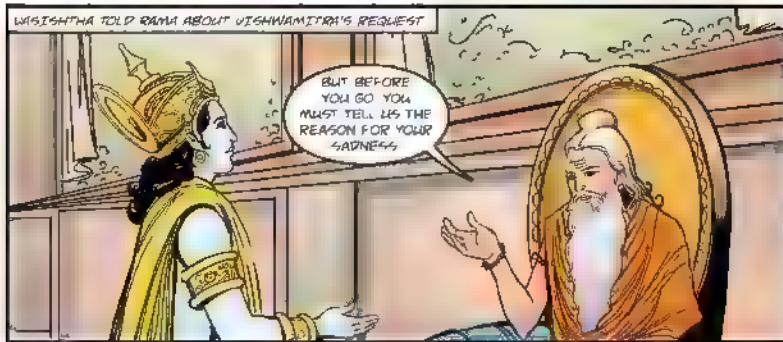
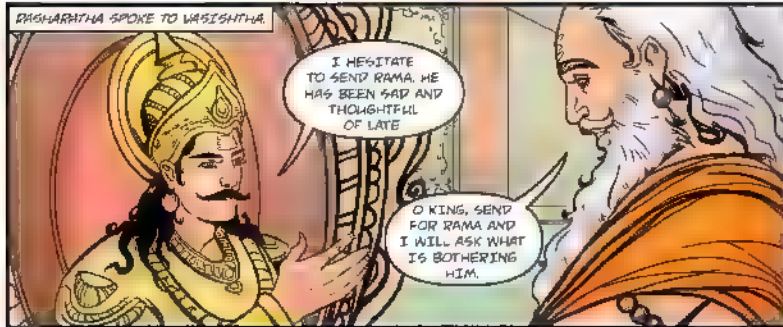


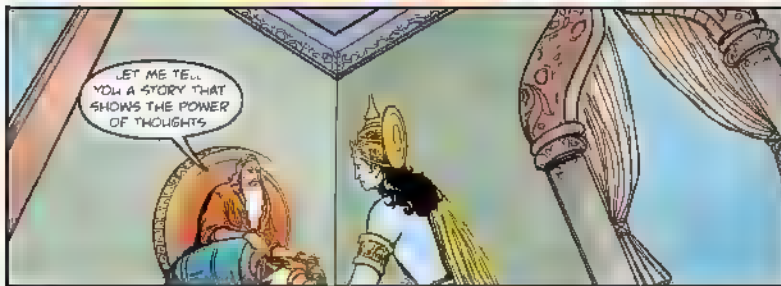
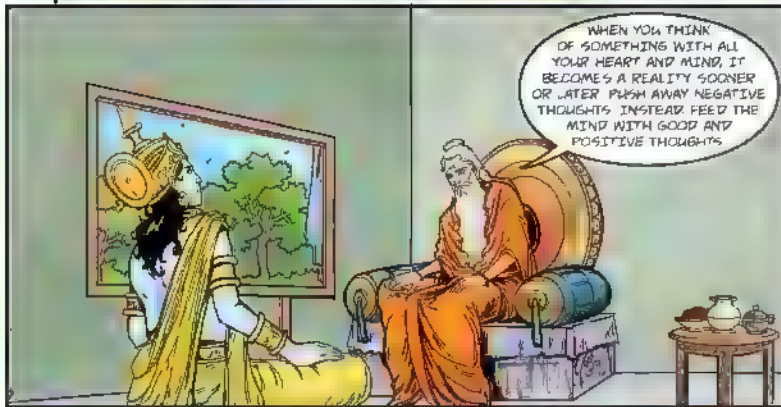
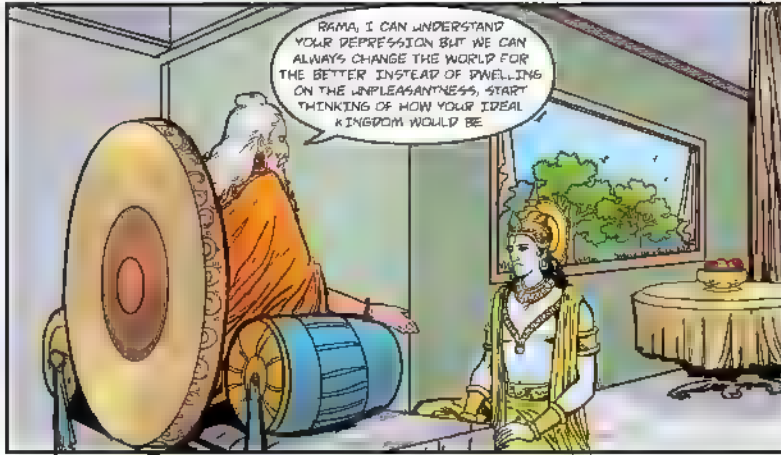


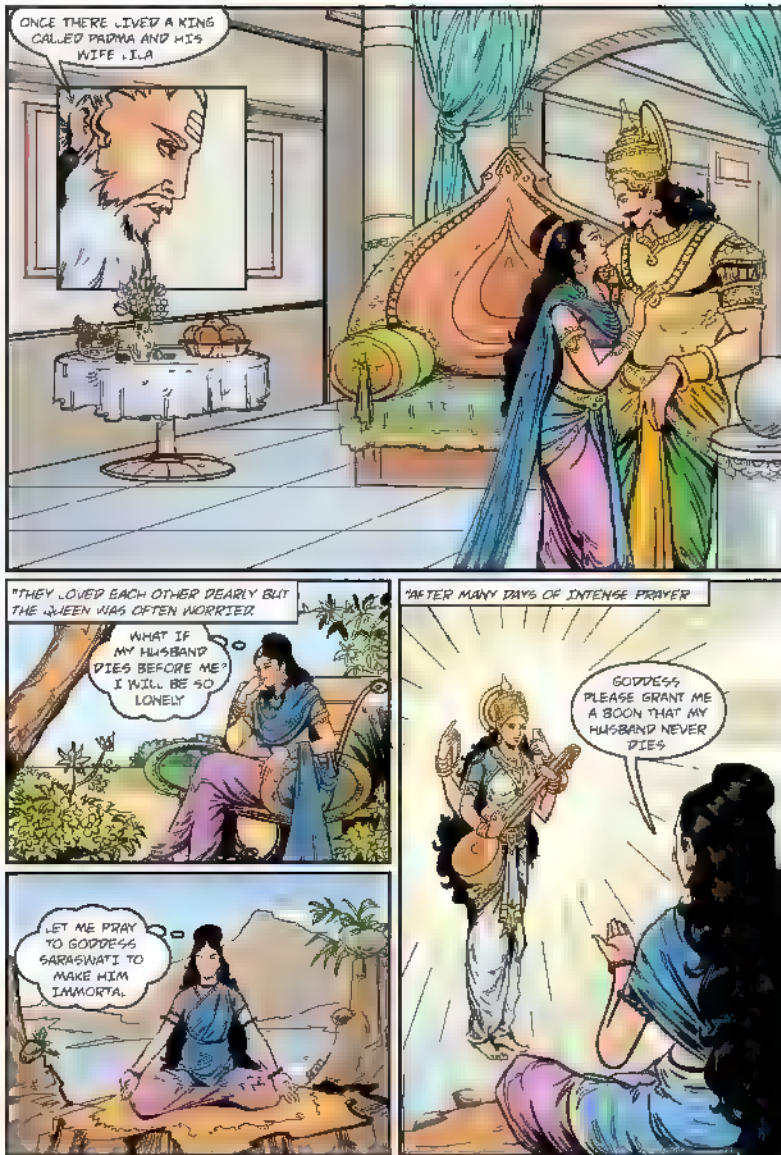


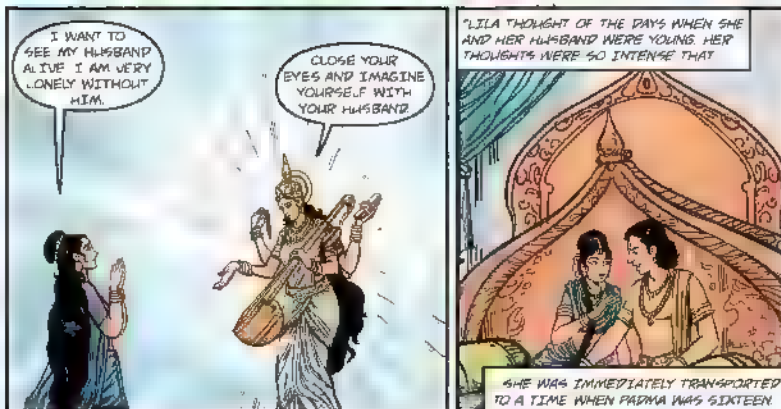
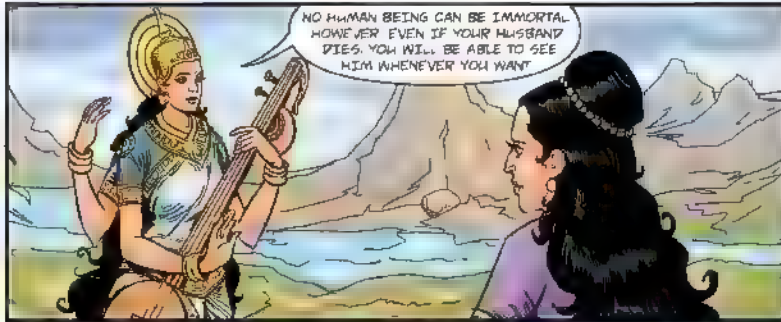






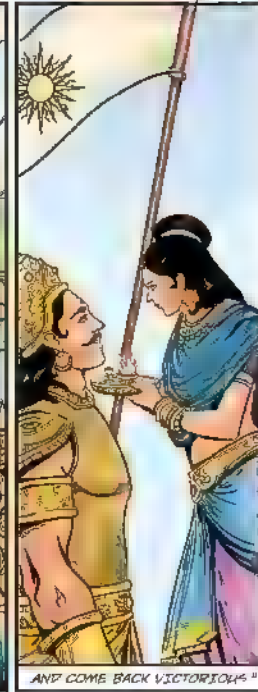




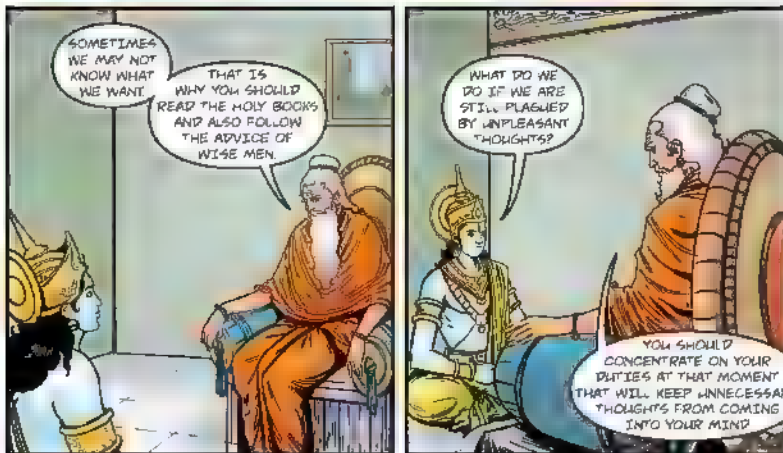




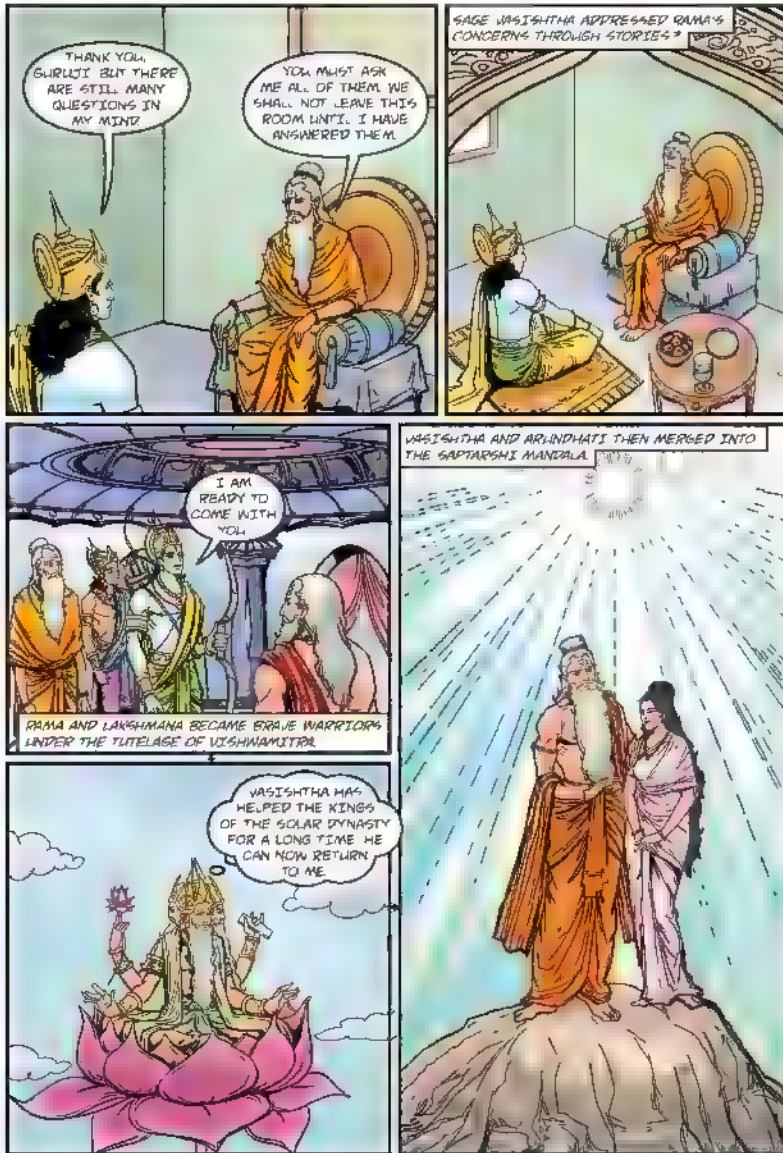
"LILA REMEMBERED THE TIME WHEN HER HUSBAND HAD GONE TO FIGHT A WAR



AND COME BACK VICTORIOUS."

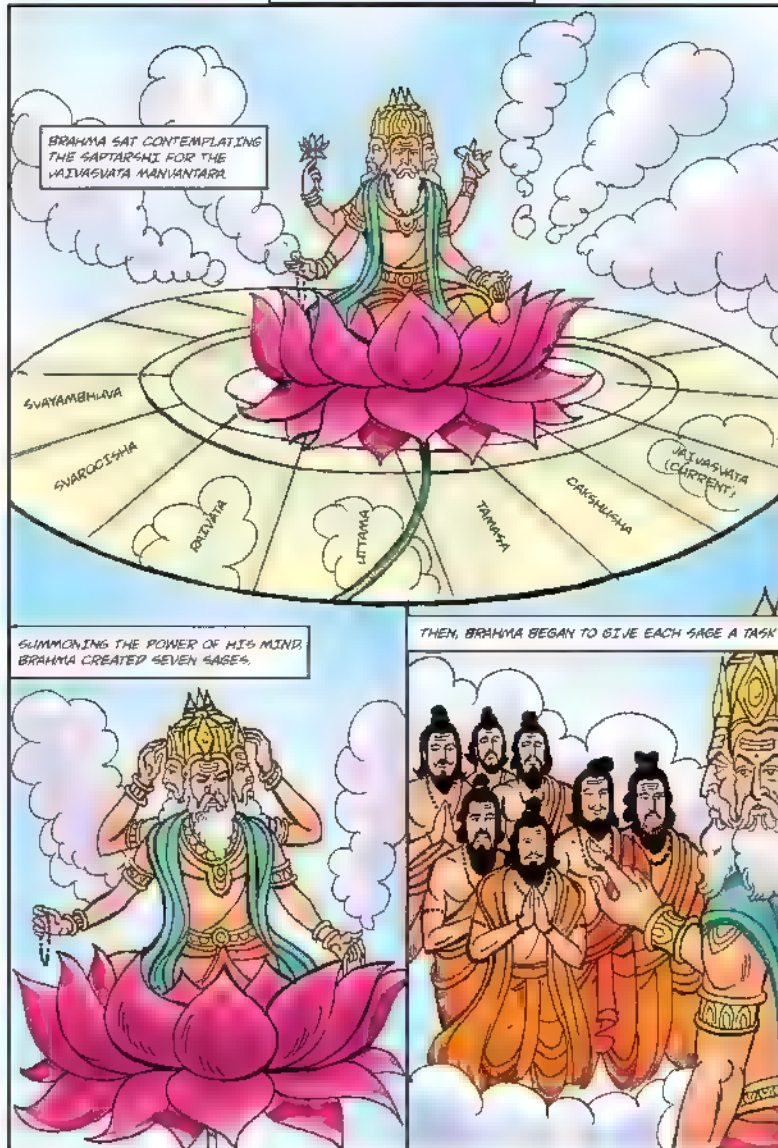


VASISHTHA AND ARUNDHATI

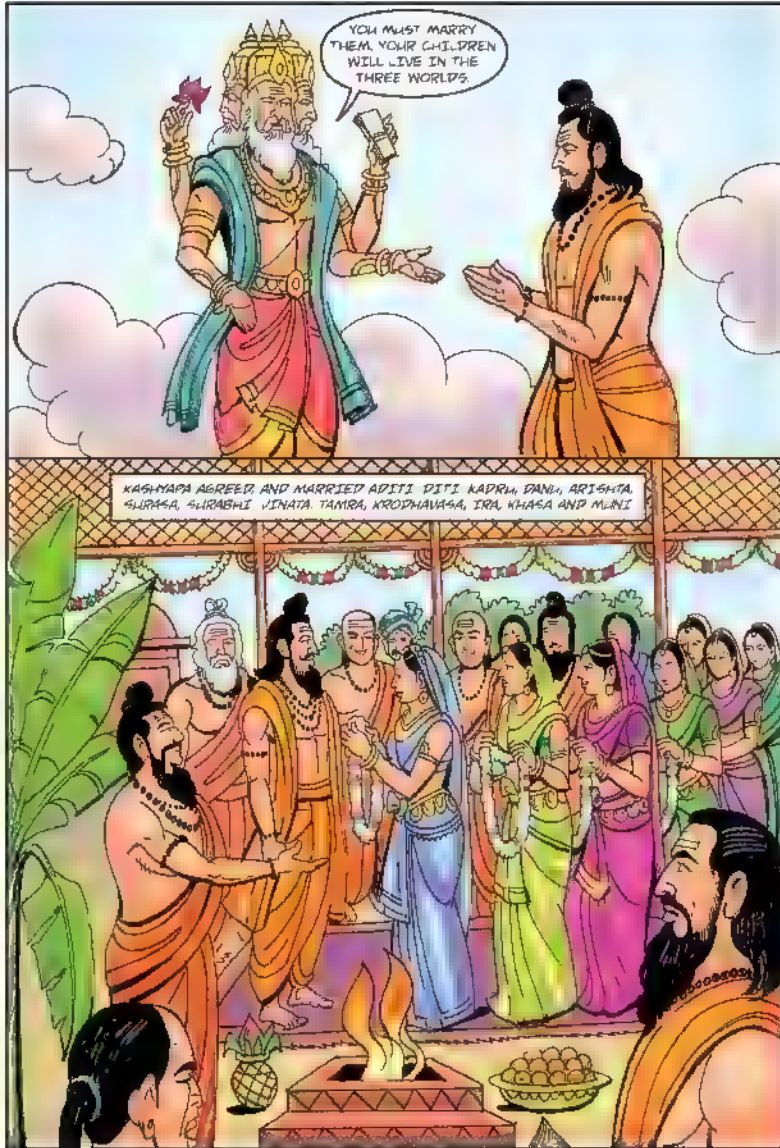


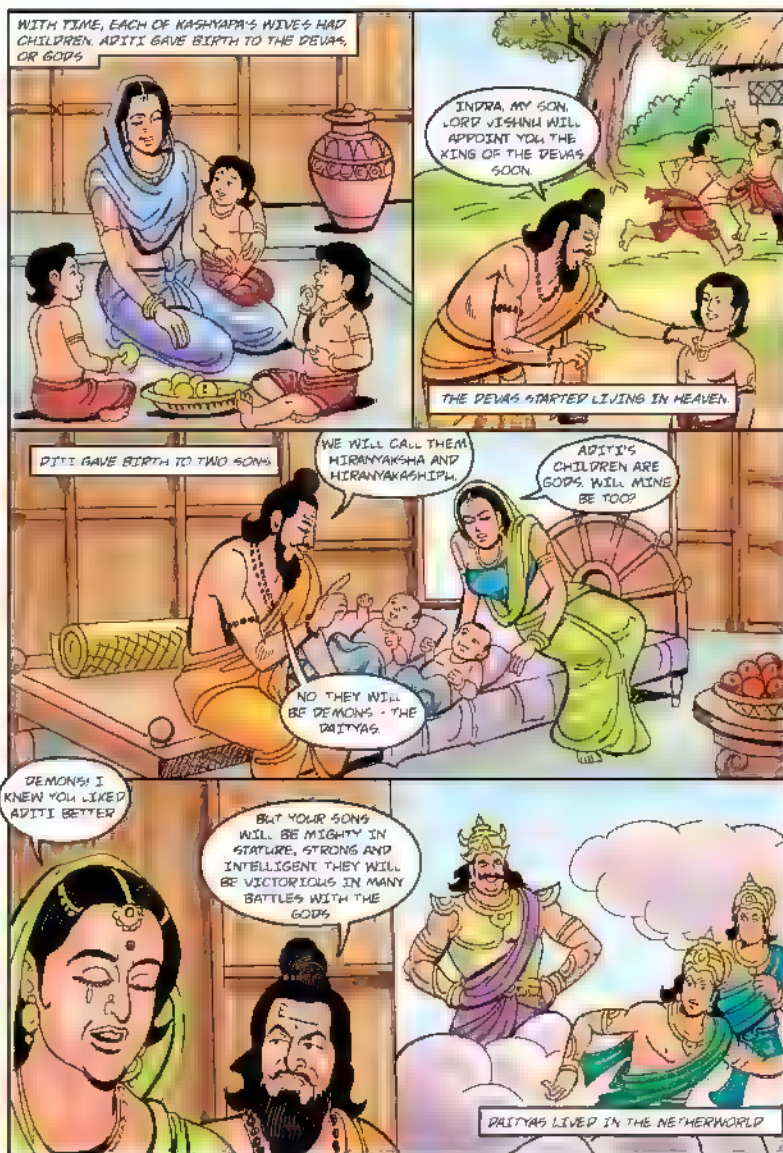
*THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN RAMA AND VASISHTHA IS DOCUMENTED IN A PHILOSOPHICAL TEXT CALLED YOGA VASISHTHA. IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY VALMIKI.

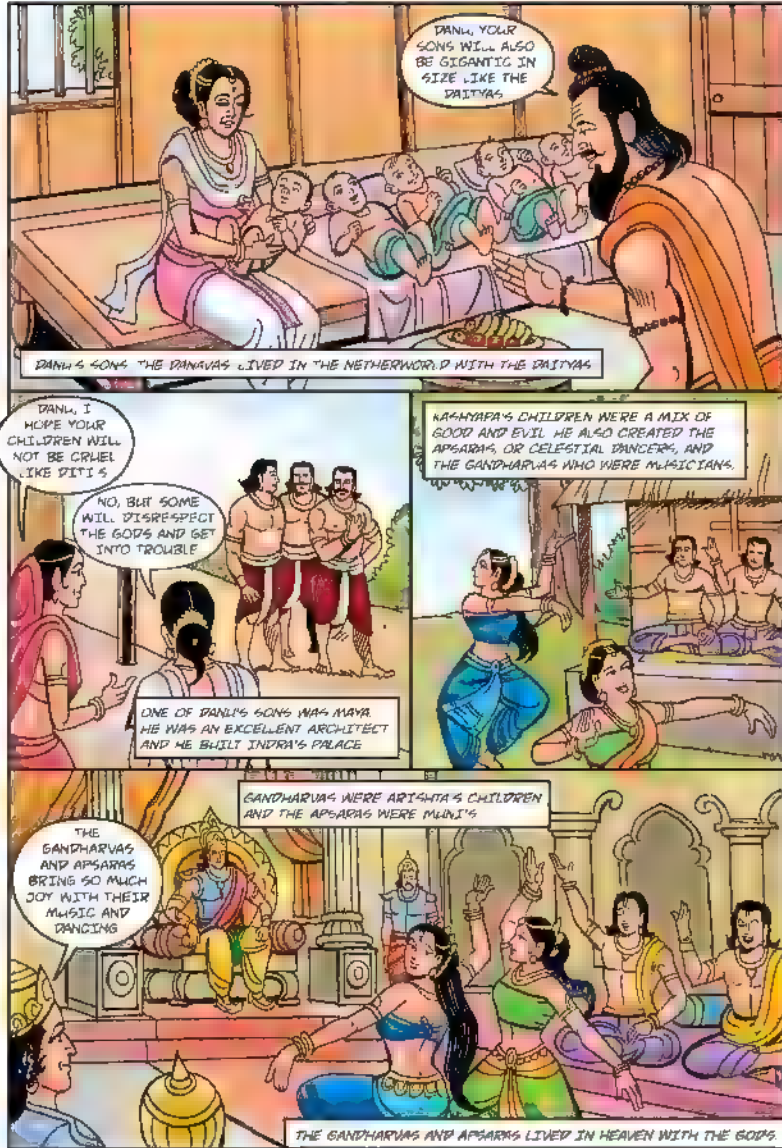
KASHYAPA



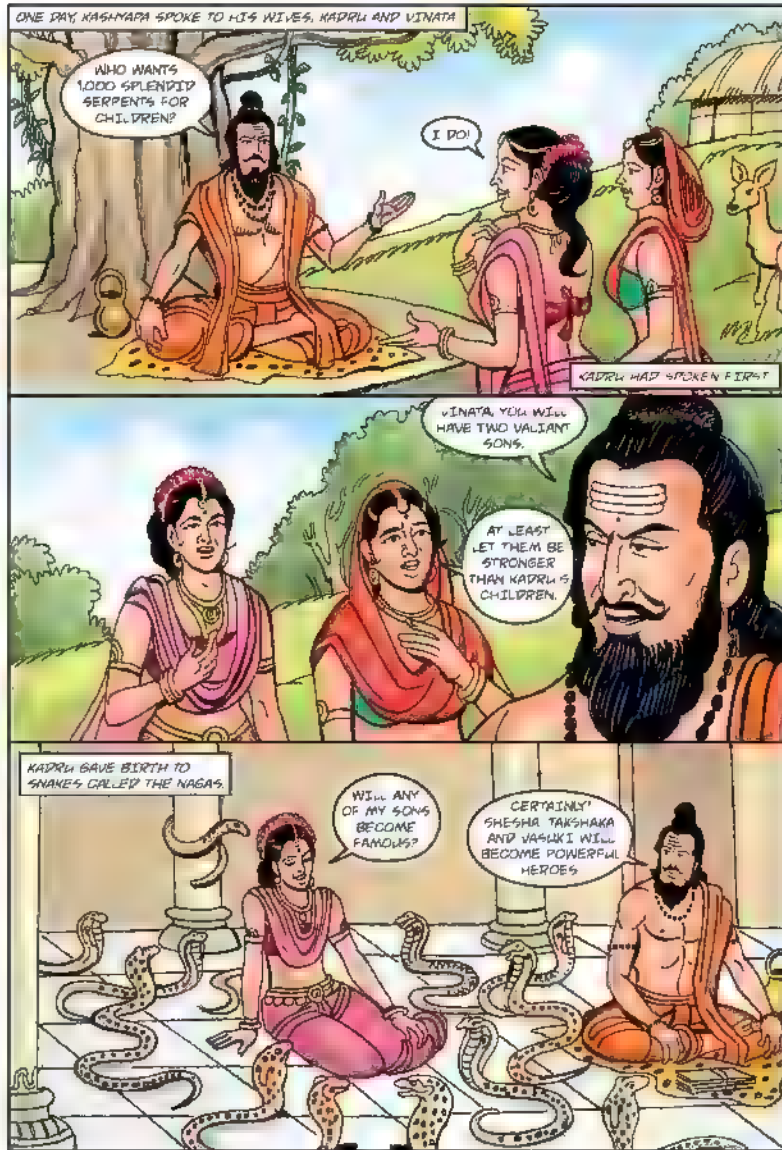






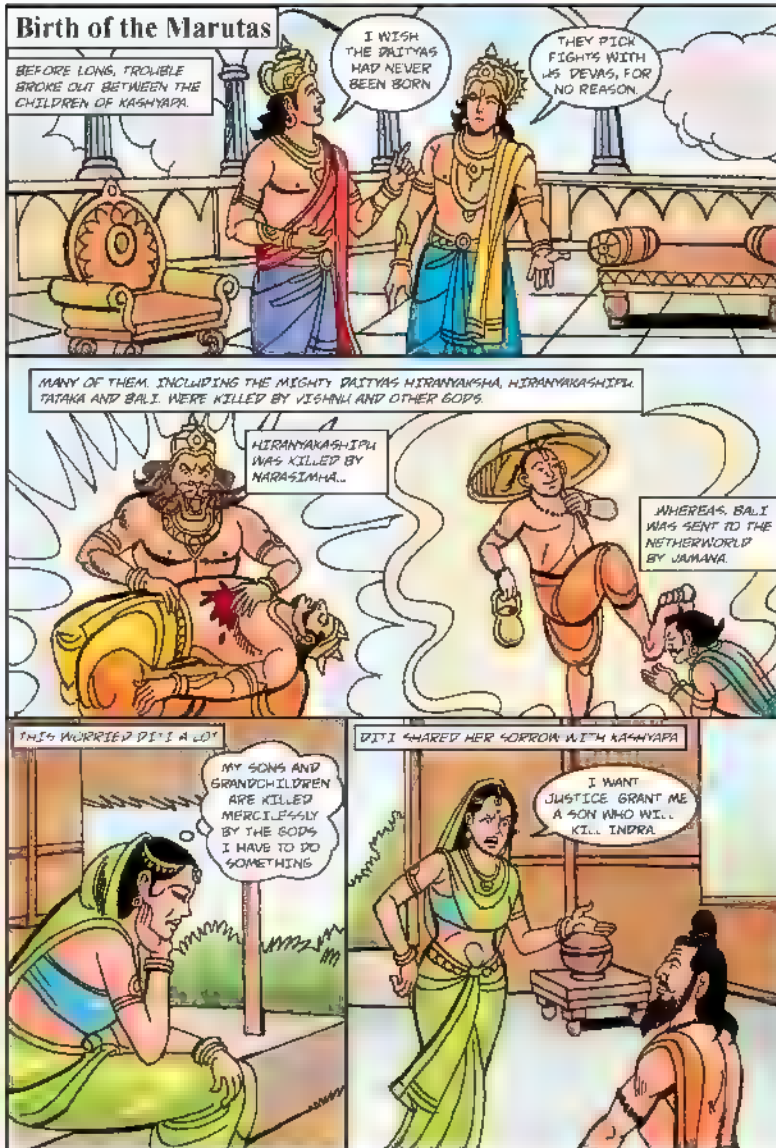




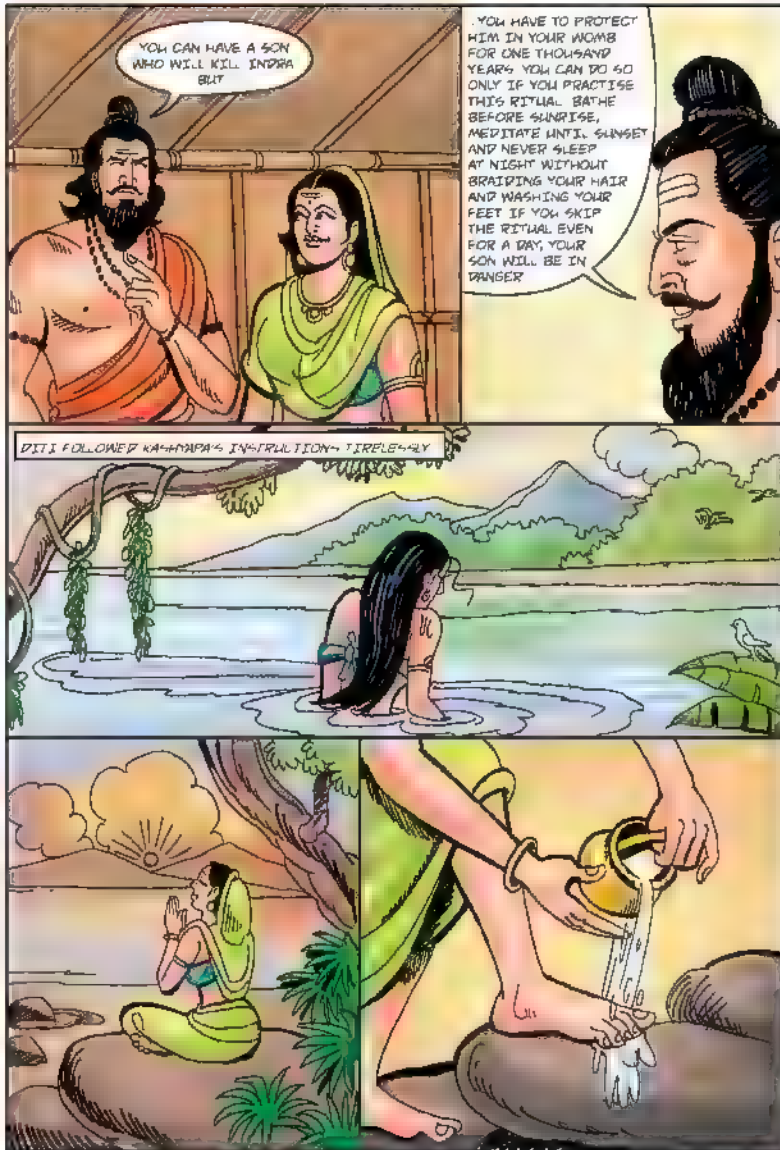


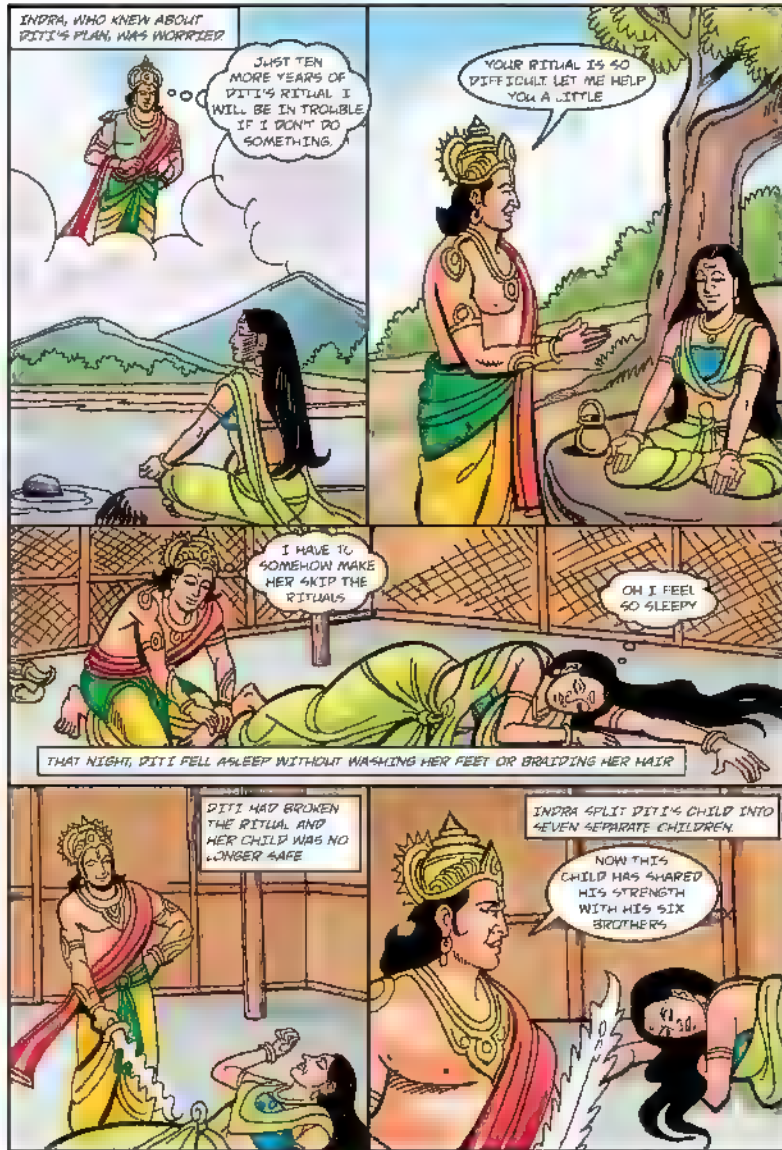


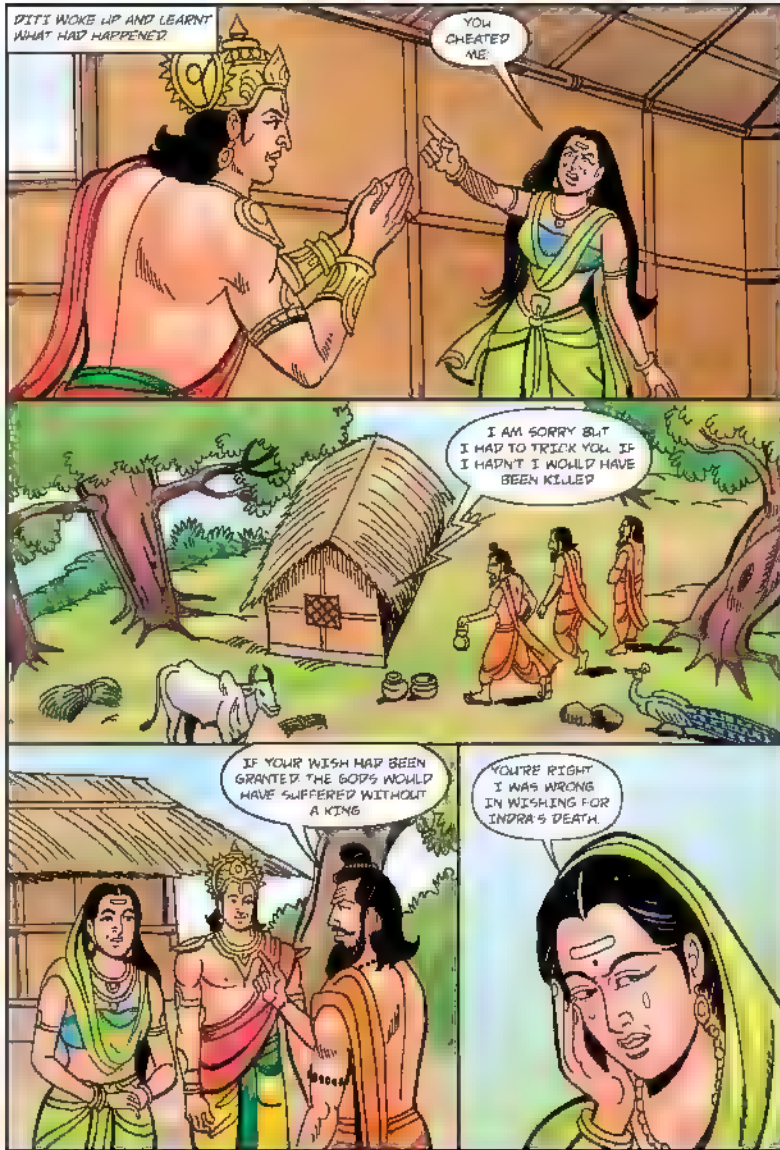






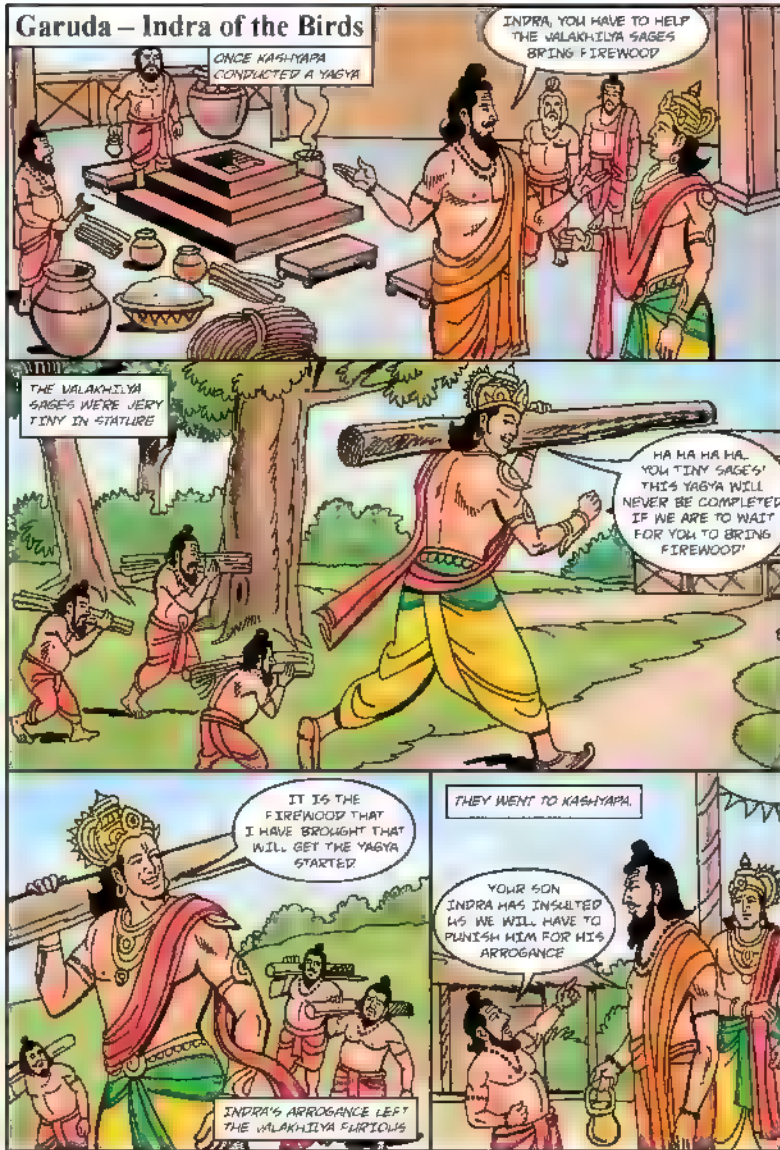




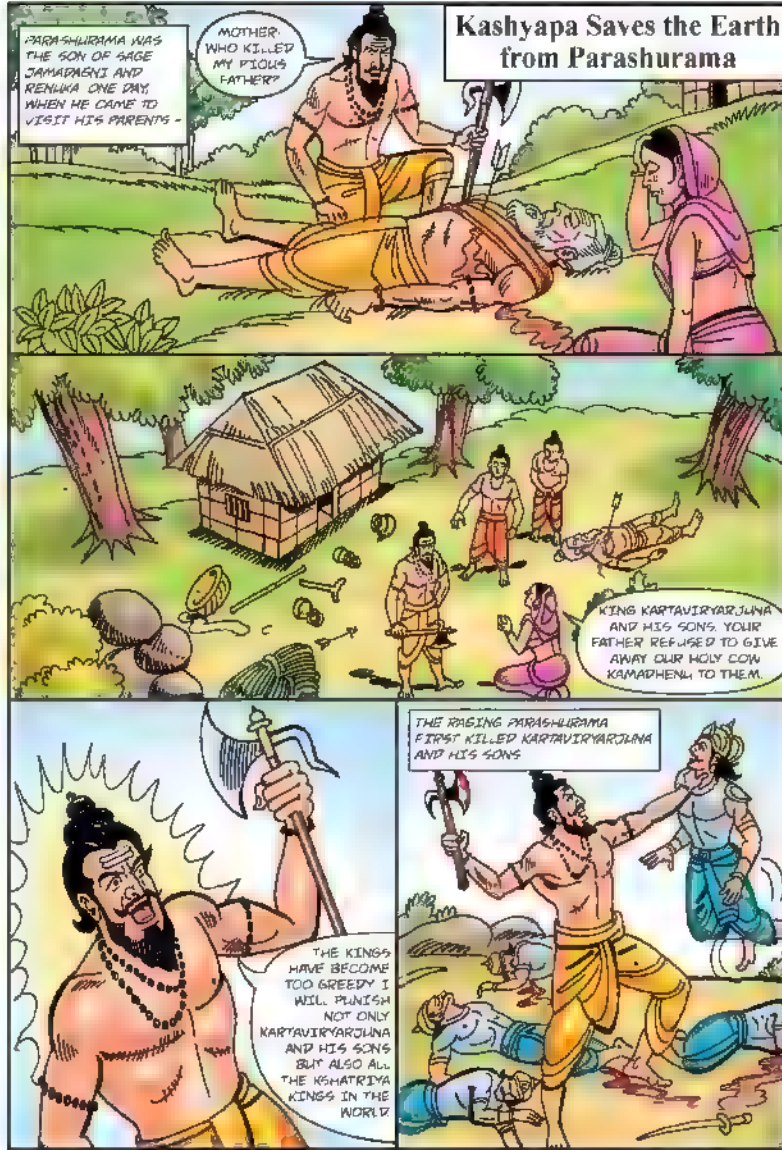


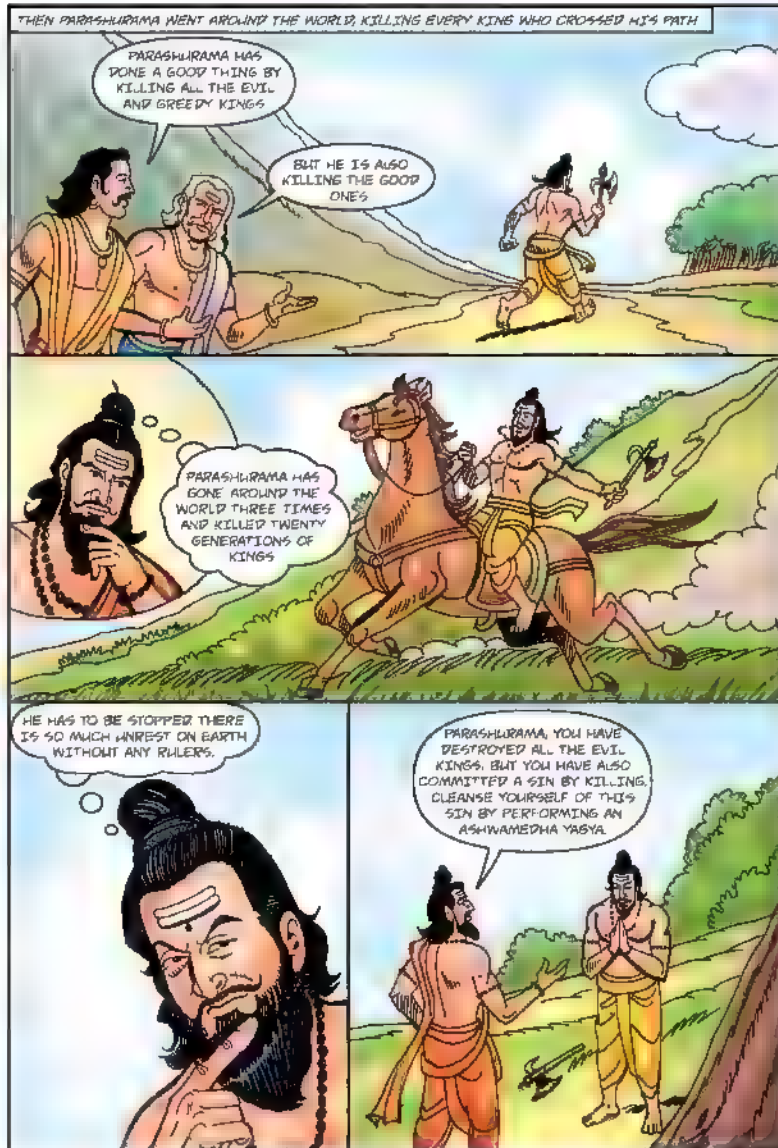


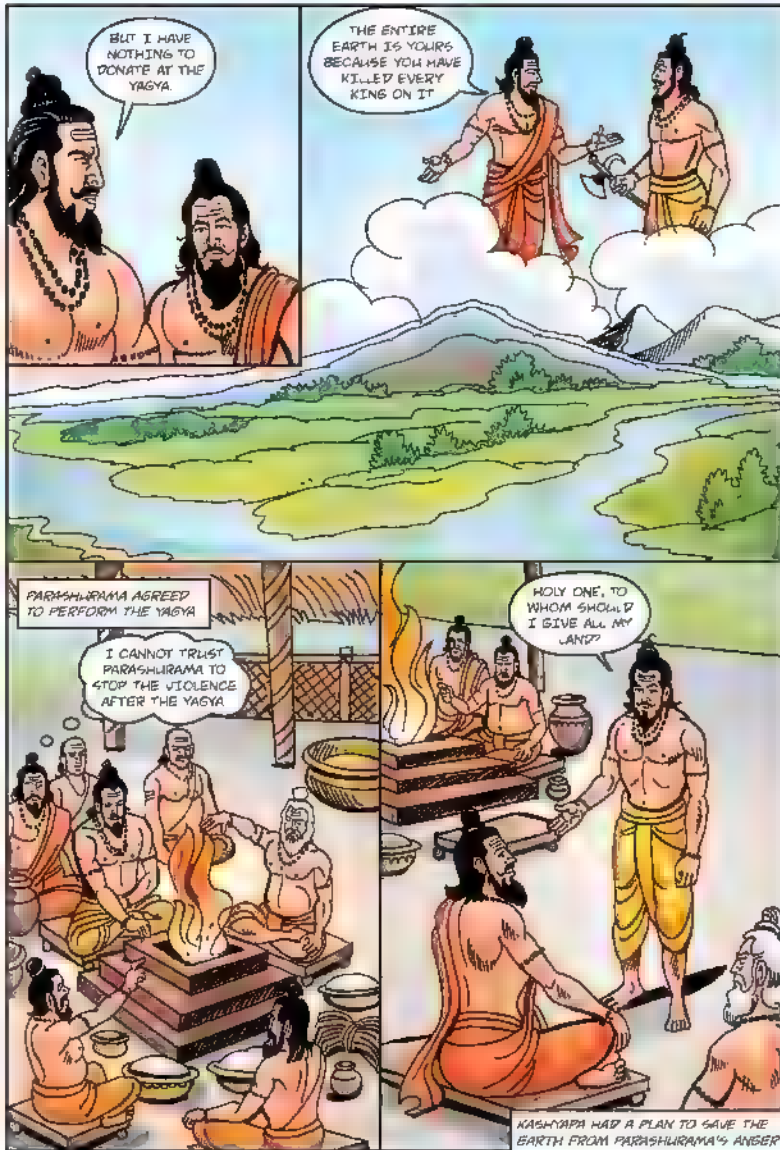
*DO NOT CRY



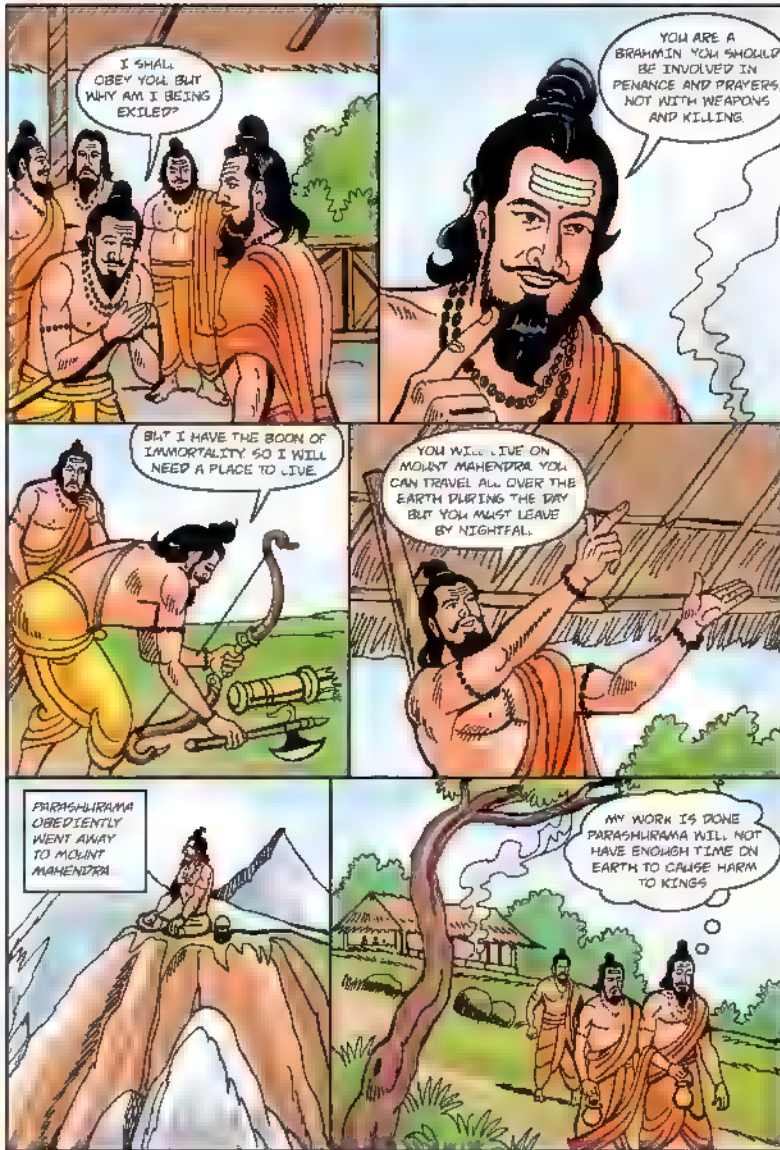


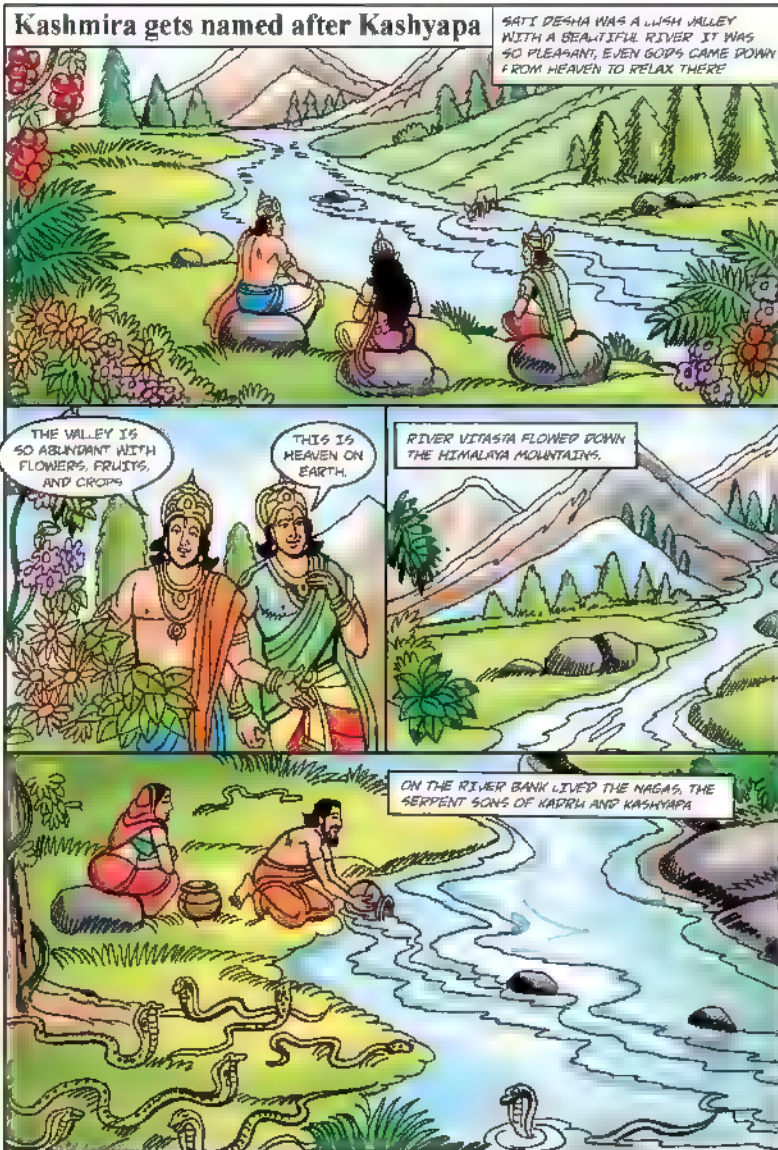


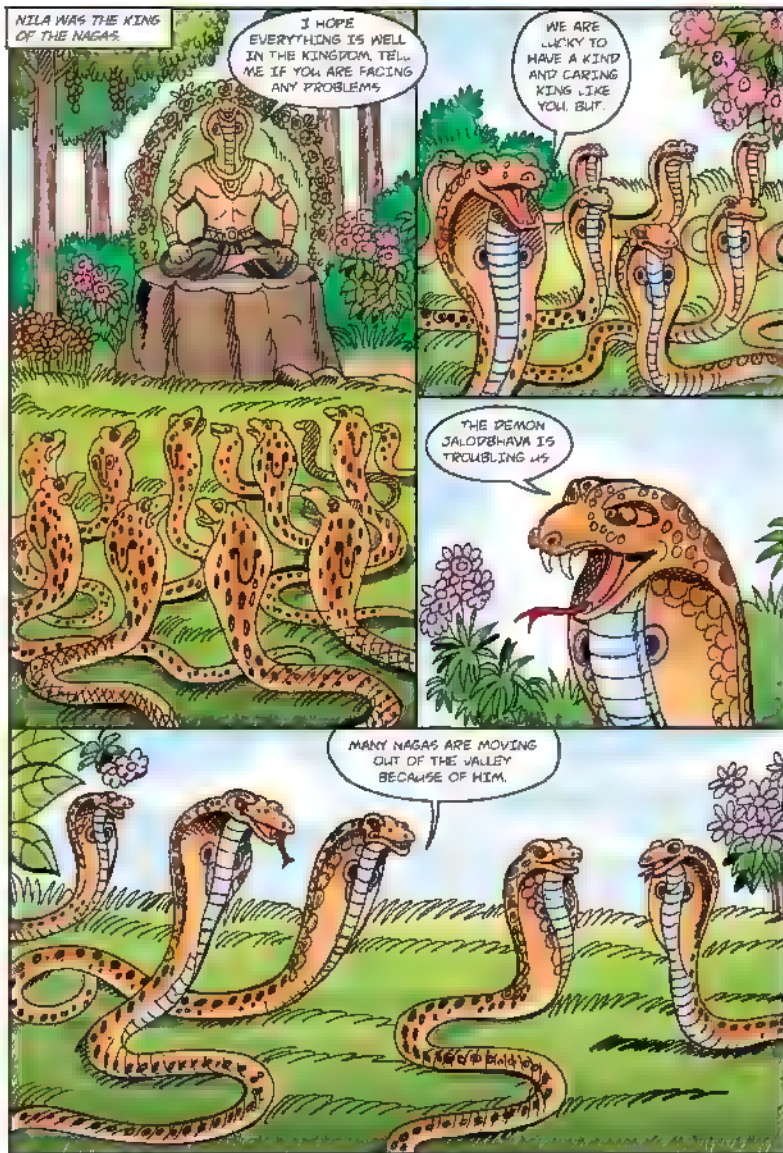


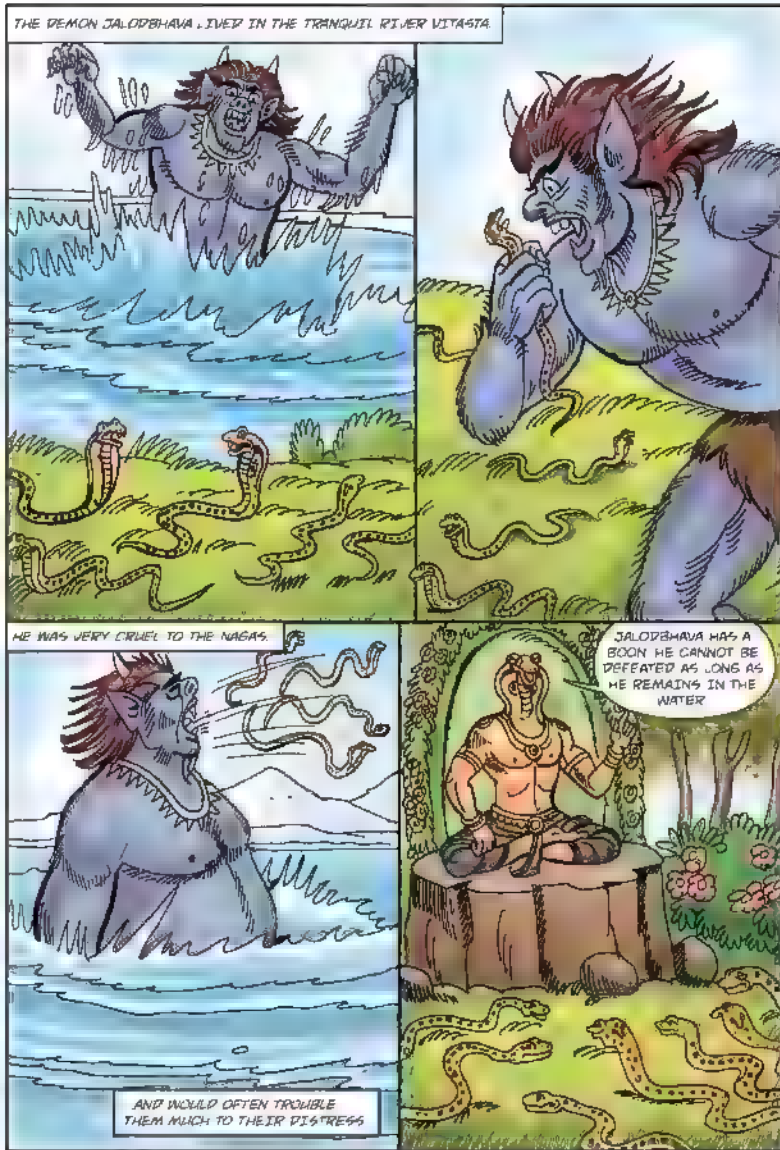




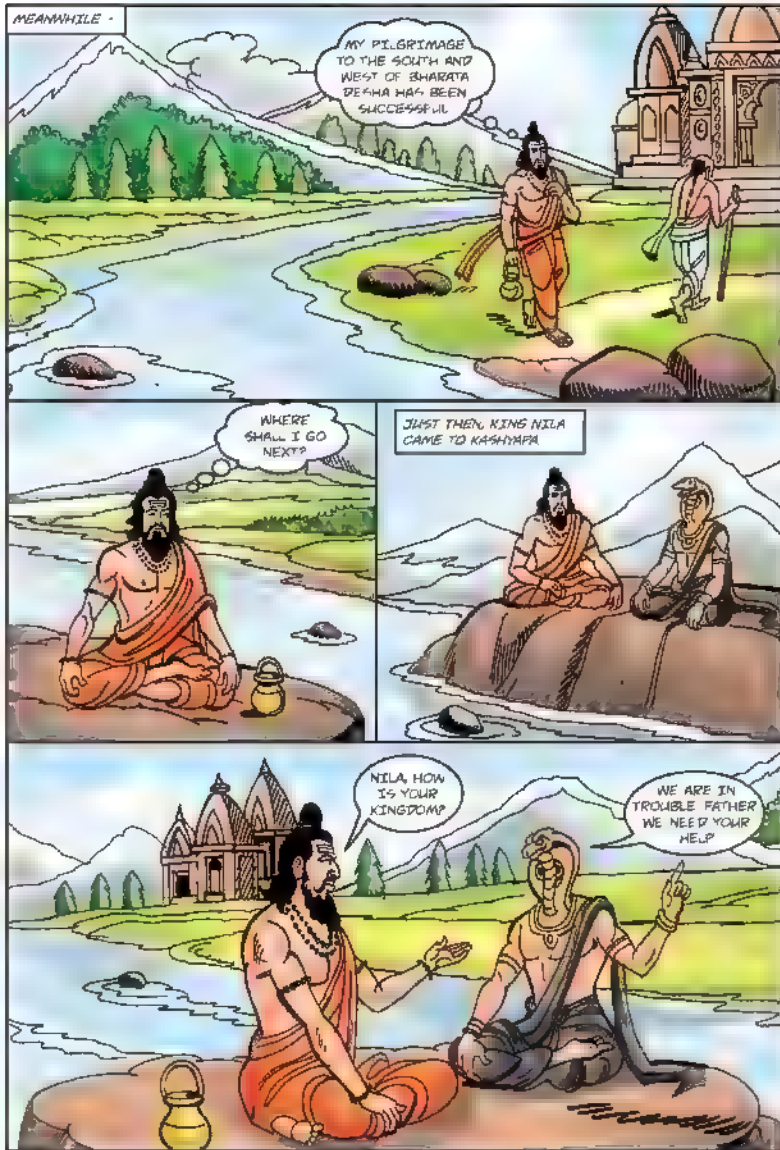


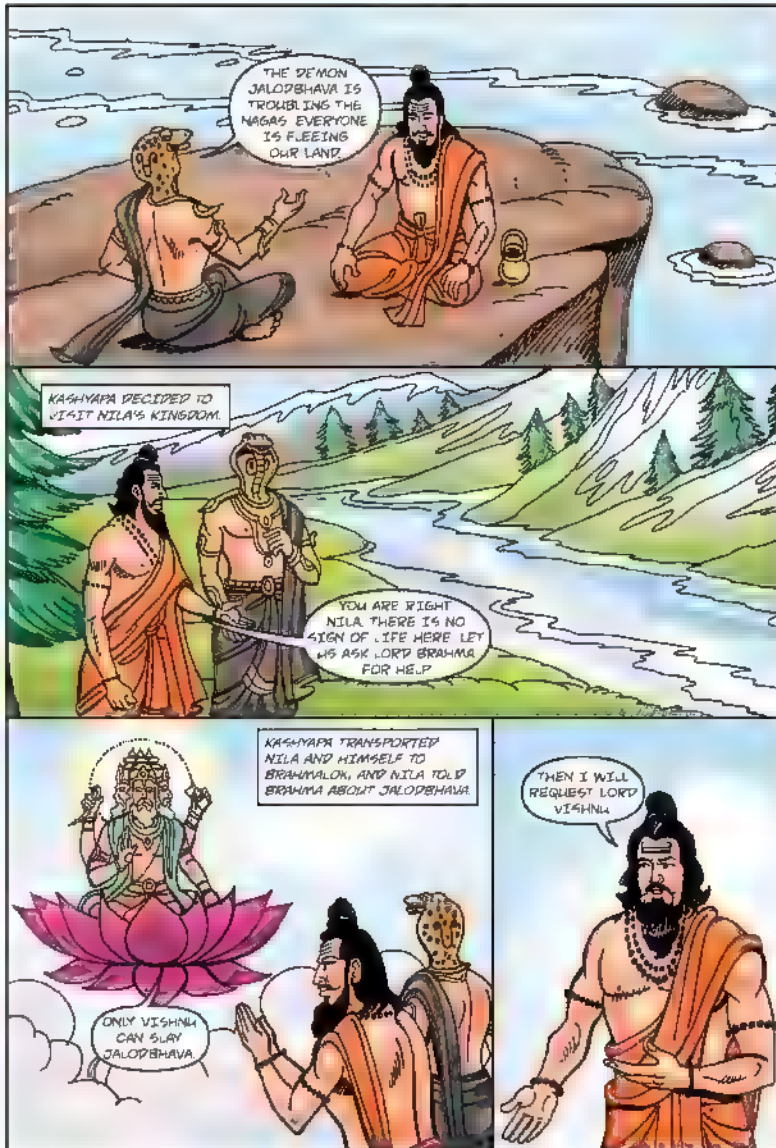




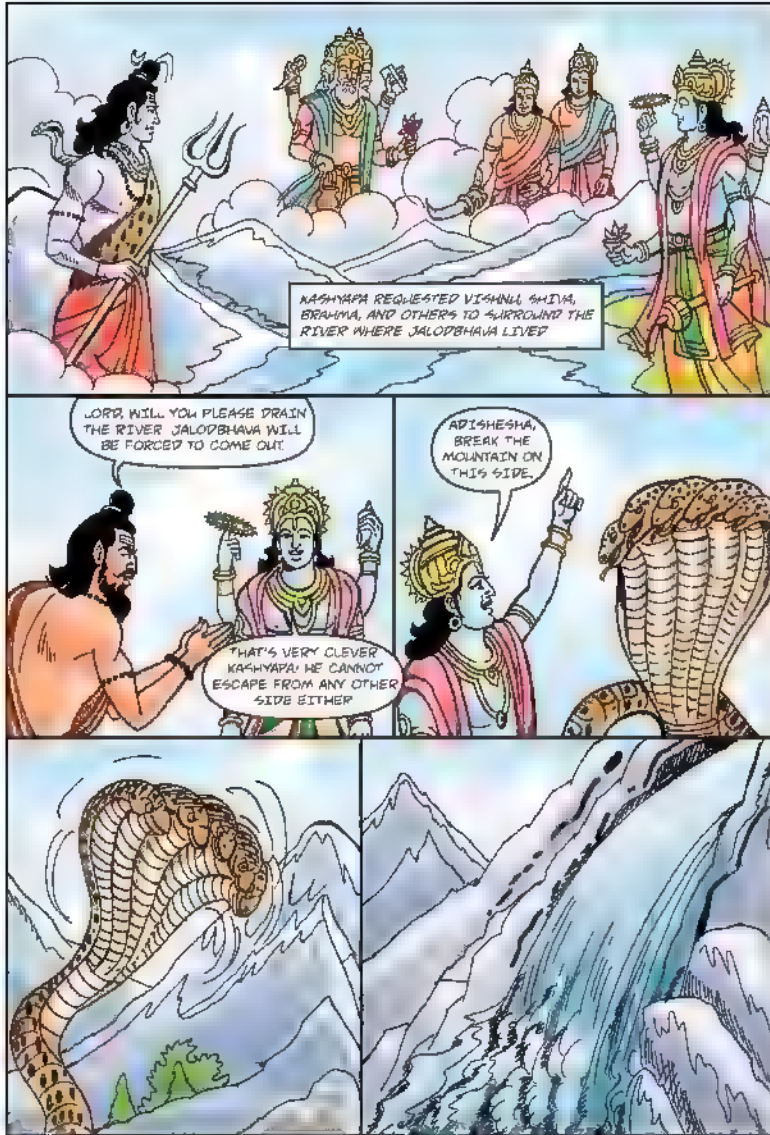






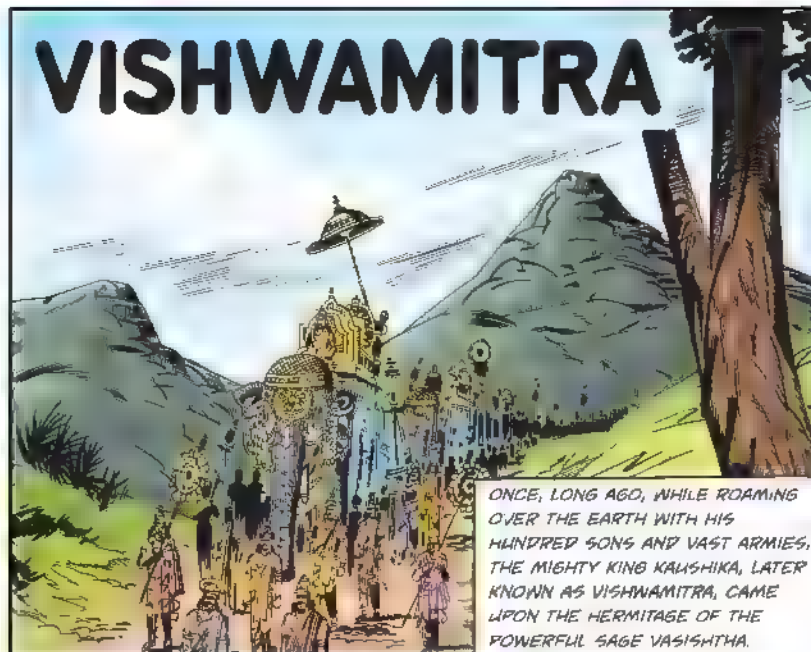


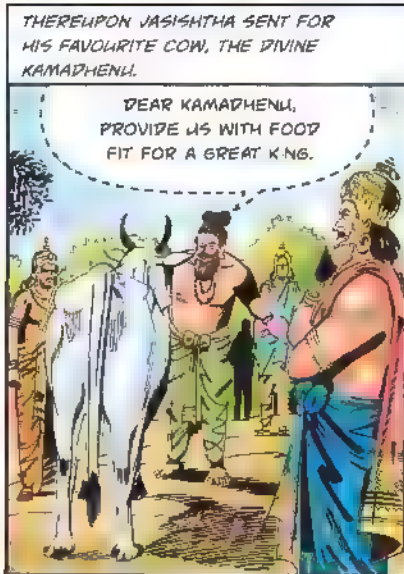
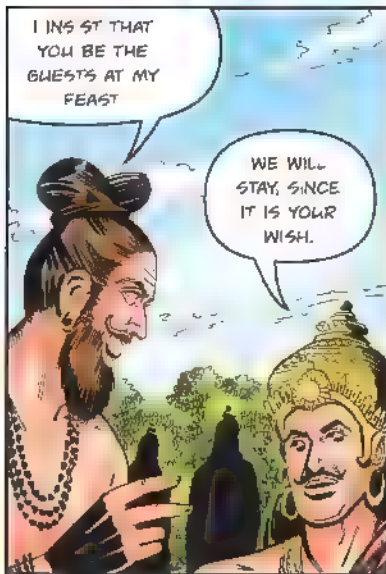
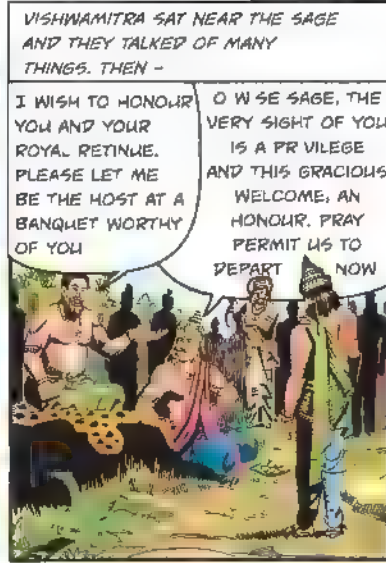












IN AN INSTANT, THERE EMERGED FROM THE DIVINE COW, CHOICE FOOD FOR THE ROYAL VISITORS.



VISHWAMITRA AND HIS MEN ATE TO THEIR HEARTS' CONTENT



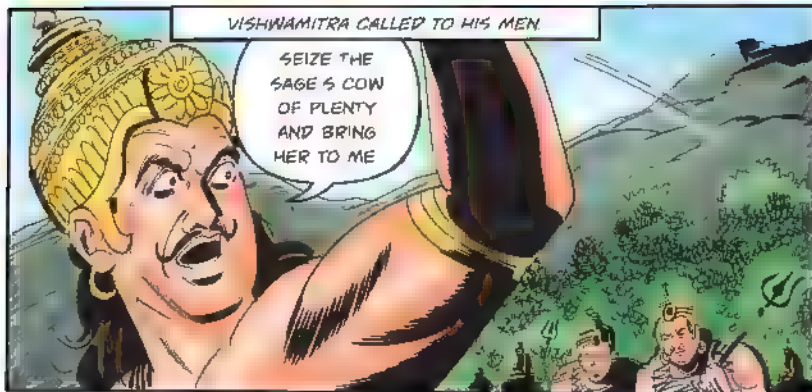
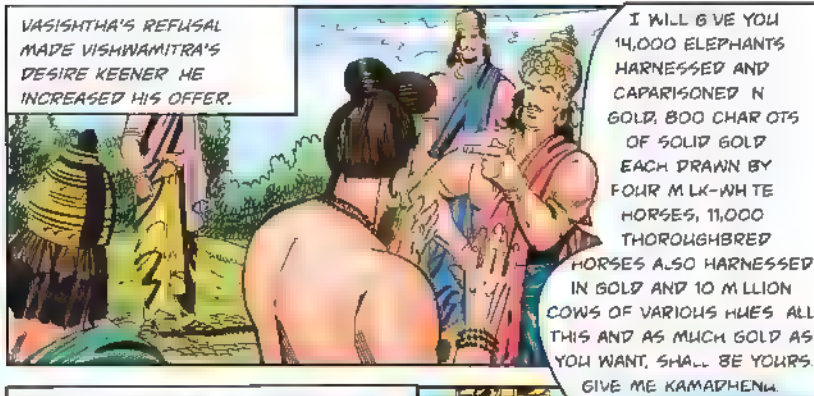
I HAVE NEVER TASTED SUCH DELICIES BEFORE. KAMADHENU SHOULD BELONG TO ME!

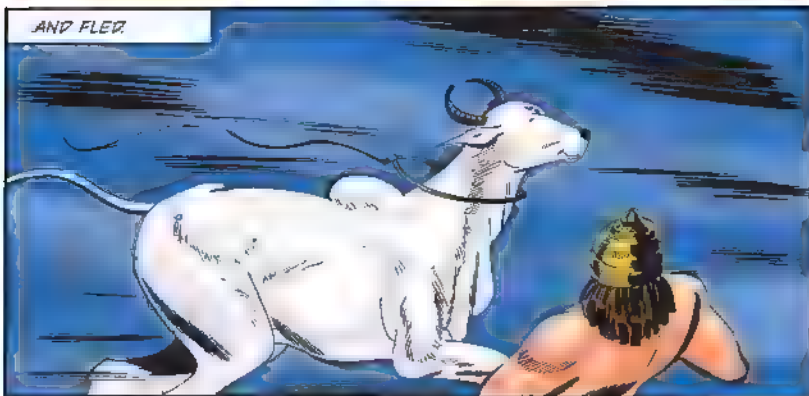
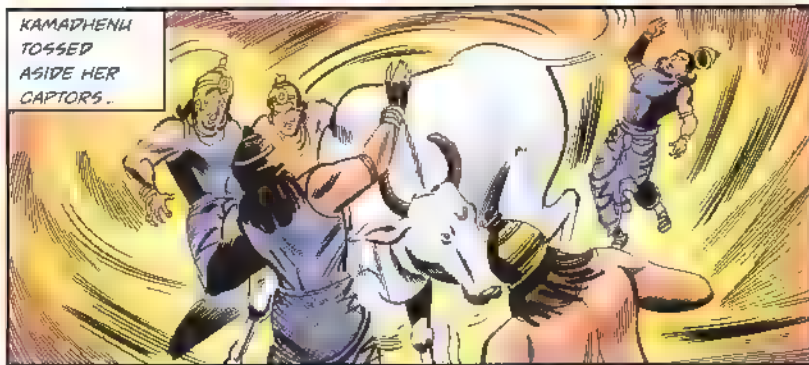
WHEN THE FEAST WAS OVER -

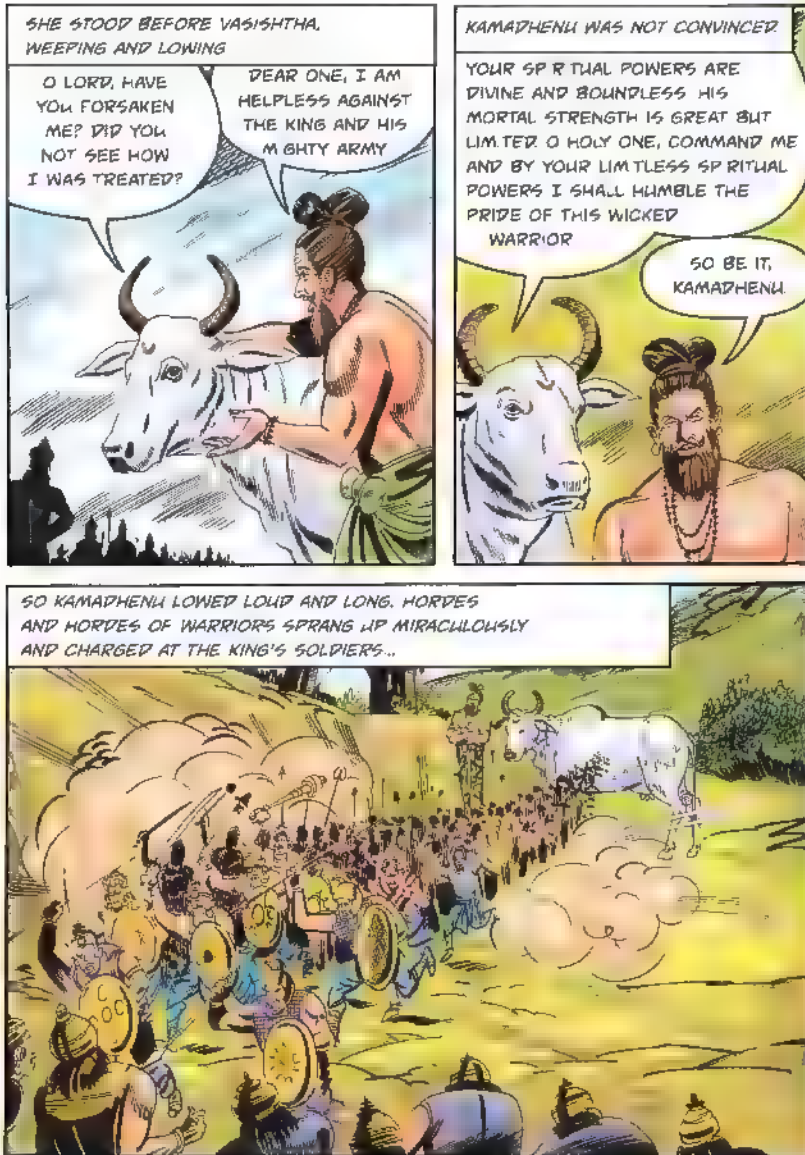
KAMADHENU IS A JEWEL AND JEWELS BELONG TO THE KING BY RIGHT SHE SHOULD BE MINE. YET I WILL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED THOUSAND MILCH COWS IN RETURN.



NO. CANNOT PART WITH HER EVEN FOR 1,00,00,000 COWS





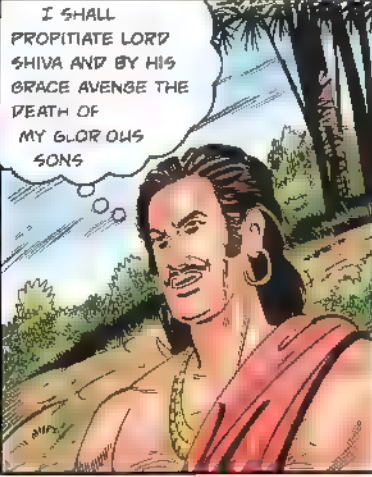




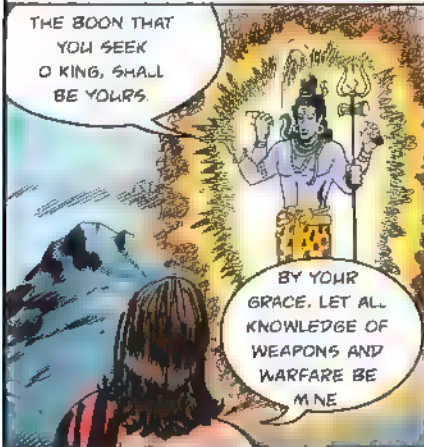
VISHWAMITRA RETURNED TO HIS KINGDOM FULL OF GRIEF AND SHAME THERE -



HE WENT STRAIGHT TO THE HIMALAYAS AND BEGAN PRACTISING SEVERE AUSTERITIES.



AT LAST SHIVA WAS PLEASED HE STOOD BEFORE VISHWAMITRA.

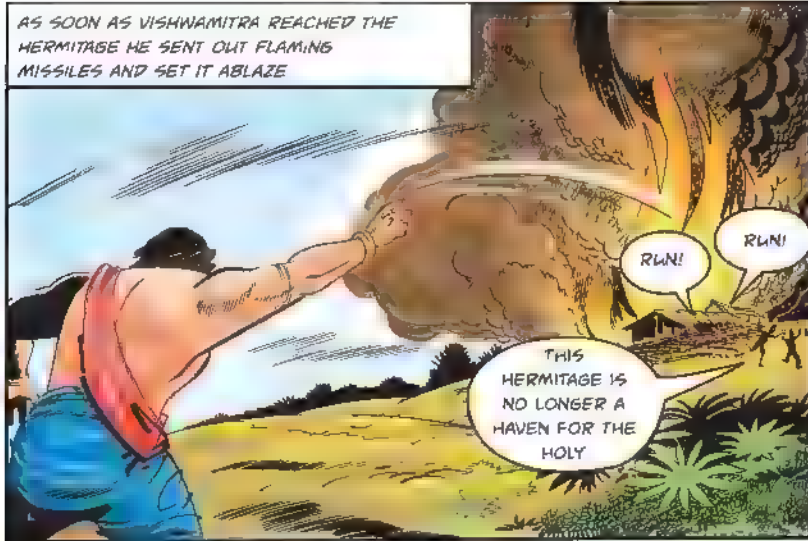


SHIVA GRANTED THE BOON AND WENT BACK TO HIS ABODE

A TRIUMPHANT VISHWAMITRA NOW TURNED HIS FOOTSTEPS TOWARDS VASISHTHA'S HERMITAGE



AS SOON AS VISHWAMITRA REACHED THE HERMITAGE HE SENT OUT FLAMING MISSILES AND SET IT ABLAZE

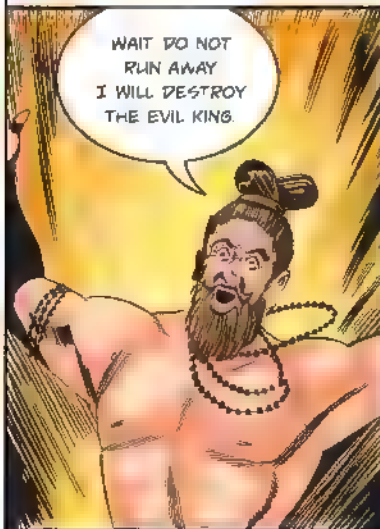


RUN!

RUN!

THIS
HERMITAGE IS
NO LONGER A
HAVEN FOR THE
HOLY

VASISHTHA TRIED TO STOP THEM, BUT IN VAIN



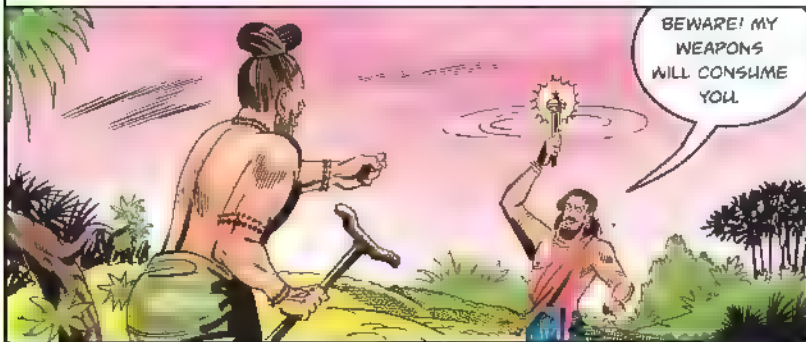
WAIT DO NOT
RUN AWAY
I WILL DESTROY
THE EVIL KING

A DEADLY SILENCE DESCENDED OVER THE DESERTED HERMITAGE IT WAS BROKEN BY THE RESONANT VOICE OF VASISHTHA

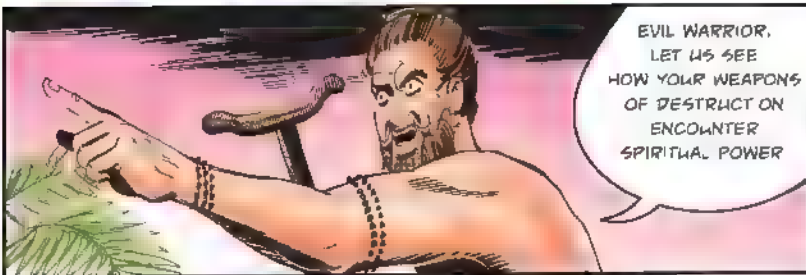


WICKED AND
DECEIVED ONE, YOU
HAVE WANTONLY DESTROYED
MY ANCIENT HERMITAGE.
FOR THIS YOU
SHALL DIE.

SNATCHING HIS STAFF, HE ADVANCED TOWARDS VISHWAMITRA.



BEWARE! MY
WEAPONS
WILL CONSUME
YOU.



EVIL WARRIOR,
LET US SEE
HOW YOUR WEAPONS
OF DESTRUCTION
ENCOUNTER
SPIRITUAL POWER

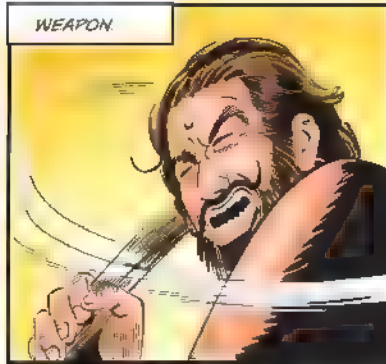
VISHWAMITRA HURLED THE WEAPON.
BUT -



ADMIT NOW,
THE IMPOTENCE
OF ALL YOUR
WEAPONS



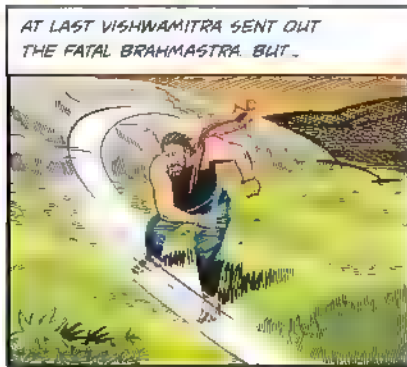
VISHWAMITRA IN
DESPERATION
HURLED WEAPON,
AFTER...



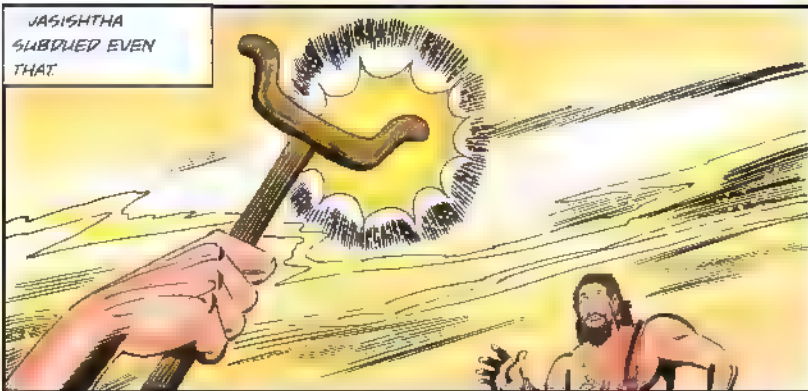
WEAPON



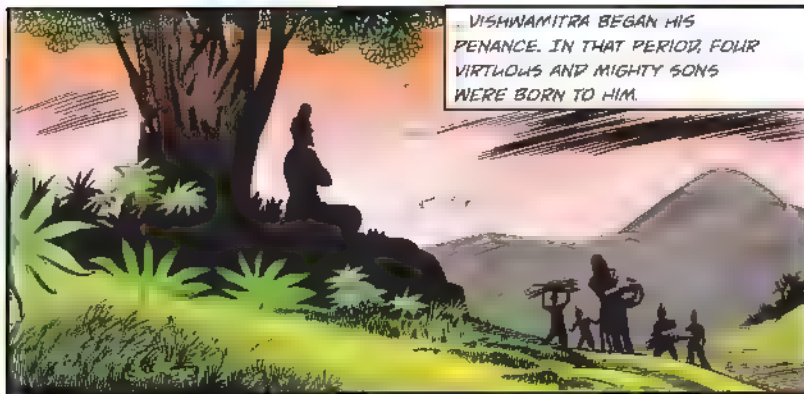
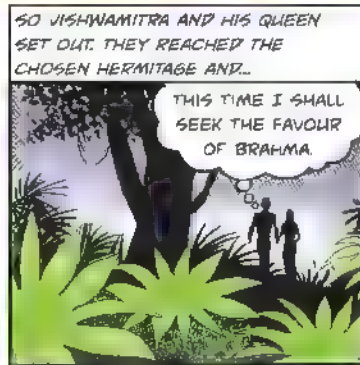
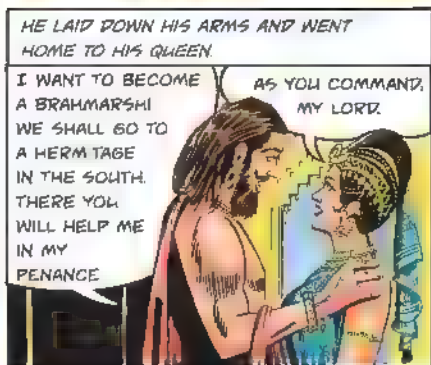
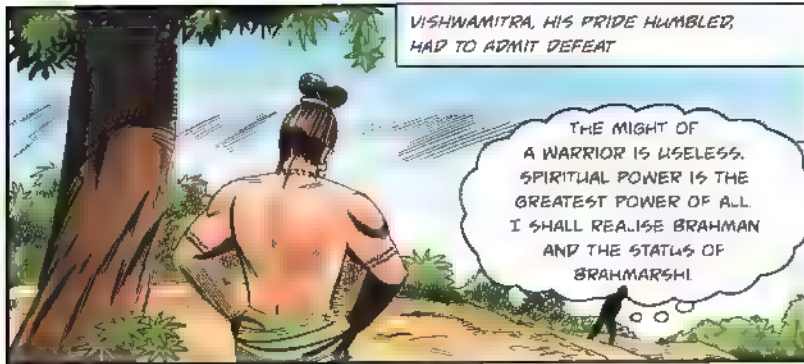
BUT THEY WERE
ALL ABSORBED BY
VASISHTHA'S STAFF



AT LAST VISHWAMITRA SENT OUT
THE FATAL BRAHMASTRA. BUT...



VASISHTHA
SUBDUED EVEN
THAT



THEN VISHWAMITRA CONTINUED HIS
AUSTERITIES WITH GREATER SEVERITY UNTIL
BRAHMA HAD TO APPEAR BEFORE HIM.



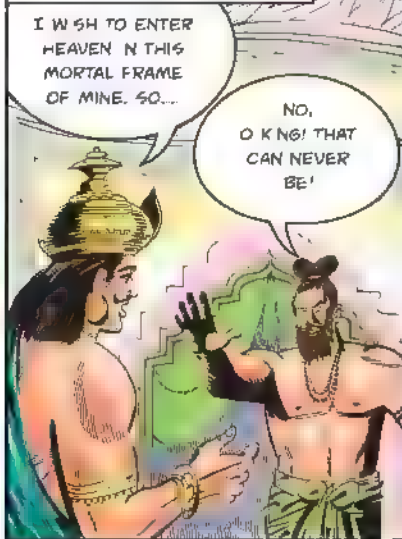
BUT BRAHMA HAD ALREADY
DEPARTED. VISHWAMITRA WAS
DEJECTED.



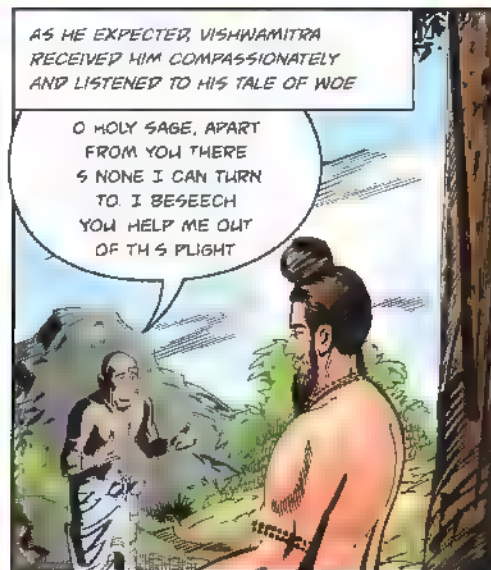
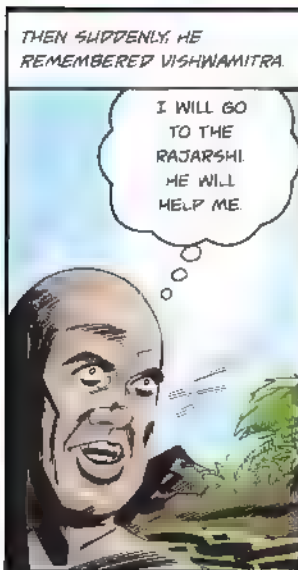
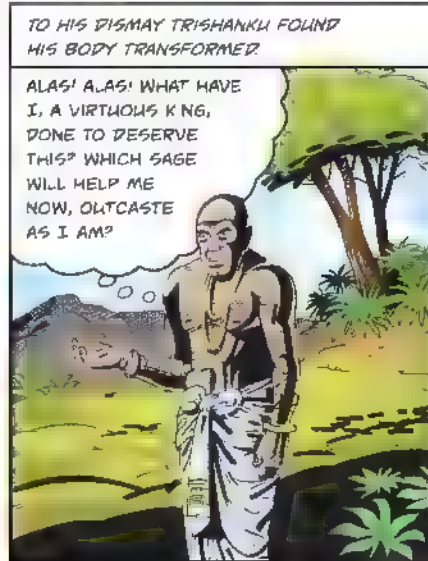
MEANWHILE TRISHANKU, A GREAT
KING OF THOSE TIMES, WAS
SUDDENLY SEIZED WITH AN
AMBITION



HE SENT FOR VASISHTHA.

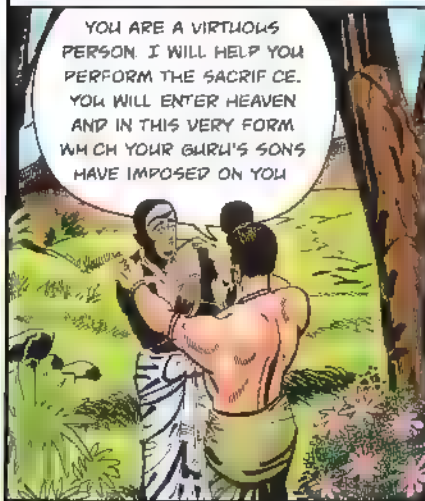






*A CLASS OF PEOPLE WHO USED TO DISPOSE DEAD BODIES

VISHWAMITRA CONSOLED AND COMFORTED THE MISERABLE KING.



YOU ARE A VIRTUOUS PERSON. I WILL HELP YOU PERFORM THE SACRIFICE. YOU WILL ENTER HEAVEN AND IN THIS VERY FORM WHICH YOUR GURU'S SONS HAVE IMPOSED ON YOU

VISHWAMITRA SUMMONED HIS SONS TO HIM.



MAKE ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SACRIFICE.

NEXT VISHWAMITRA CALLED HIS DISCIPLES TO HIM.



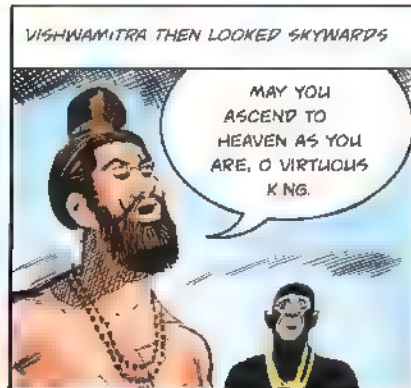
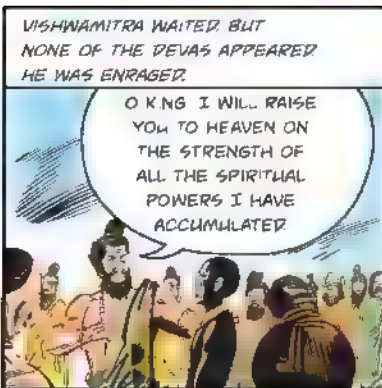
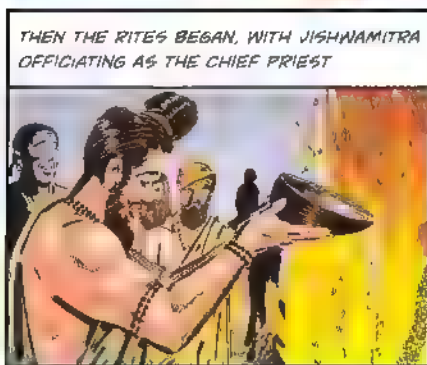
INVITE ALL THE PIOUS AND THE LEARNED OF THE LAND HERE FOR THE GREAT SACRIFICE.

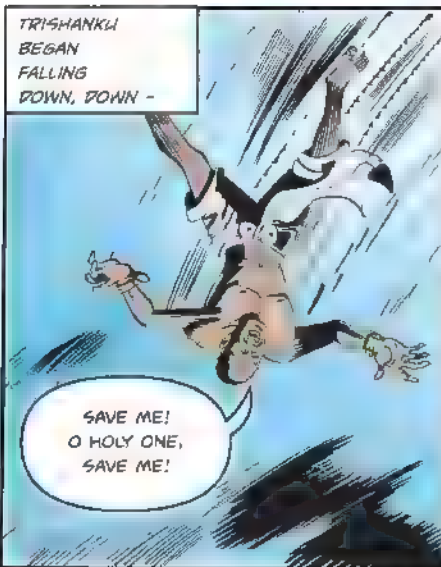
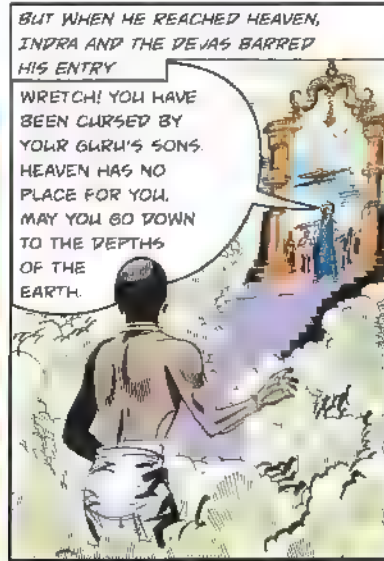
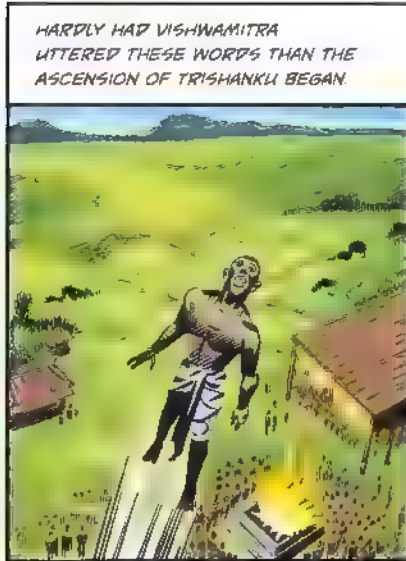
THE DISCIPLES RETURNED AFTER A FEW DAYS.



SAGE VASISHTHA AND HIS SONS REFUSE TO COME. THE SONS SAY THEY WOULD BE DEFILED

MAY THEY BE DESTROYED FOR DREGARDING ONE WHO IS A SAGE AND FREE OF GUILT





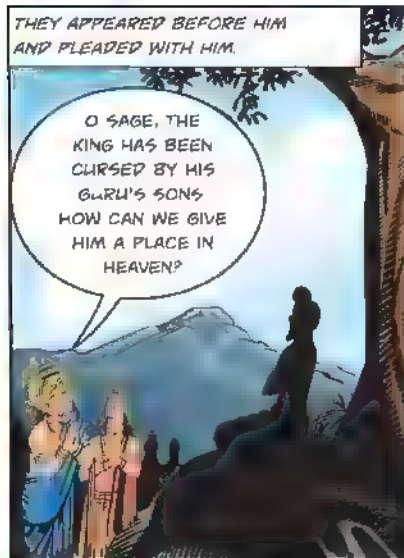
AND VISHWAMITRA
CREATED SEVEN PLANETS
AND TWENTY-SEVEN
STARS. BUT HE WAS NOT
SATISFIED.

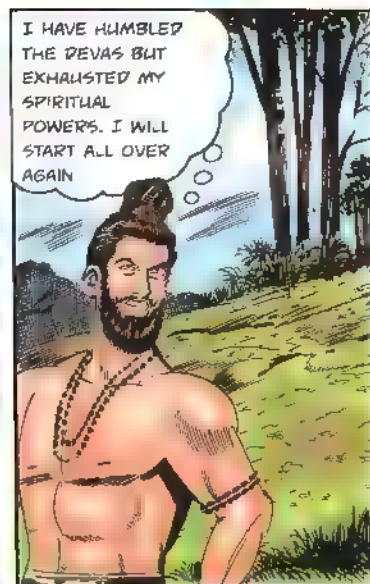
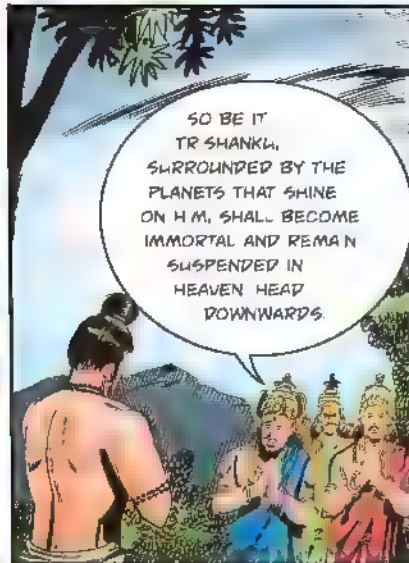
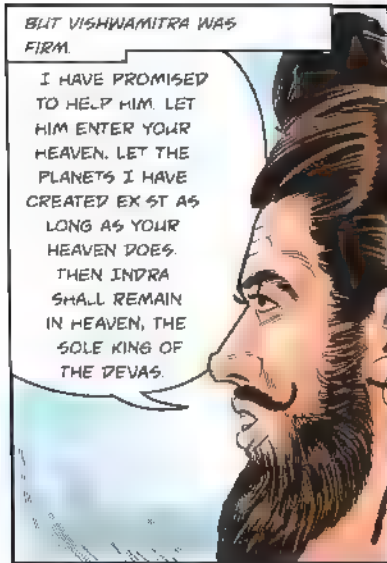


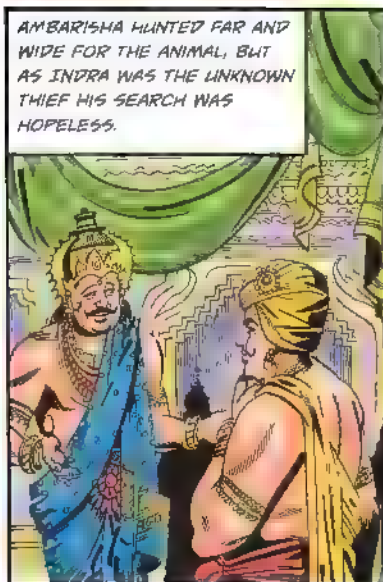
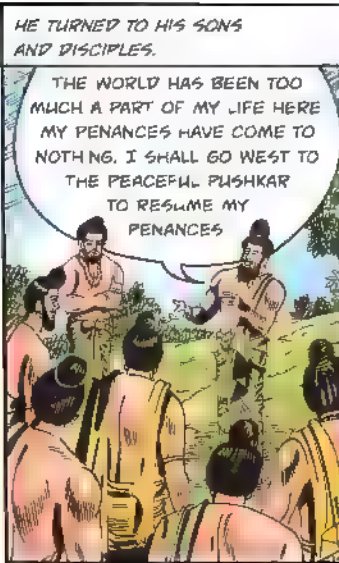
WHEN THE DEVAS DIVINED HIS
INTENTIONS, THEY WERE
PERTURBED.



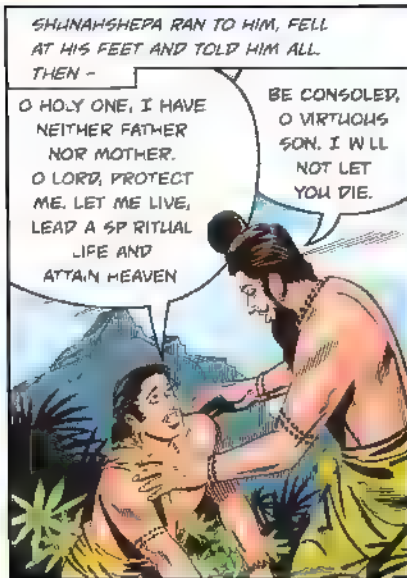
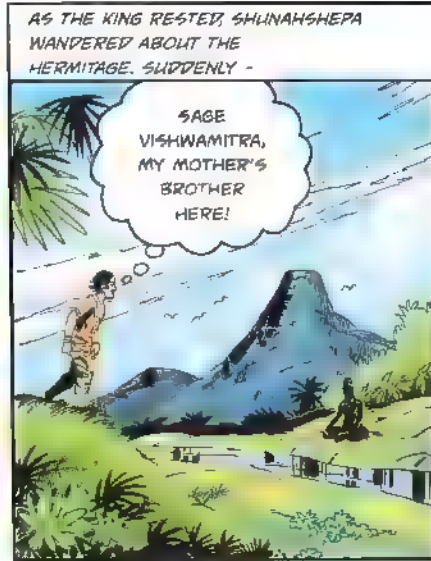
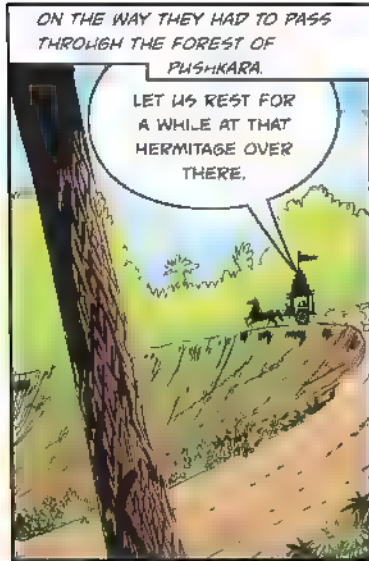
THEY APPEARED BEFORE HIM
AND PLEADED WITH HIM.

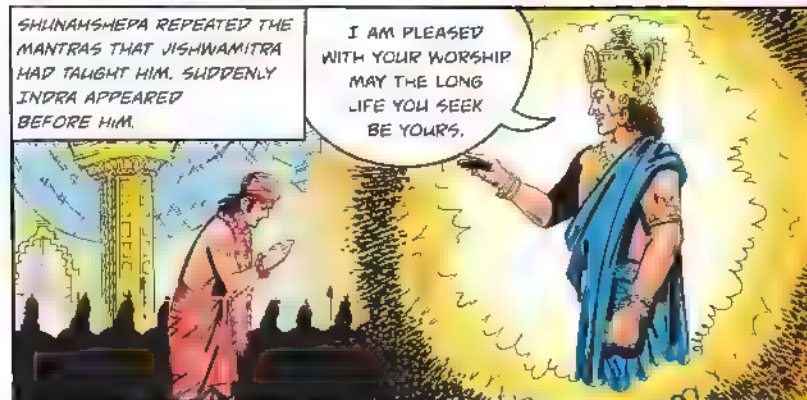
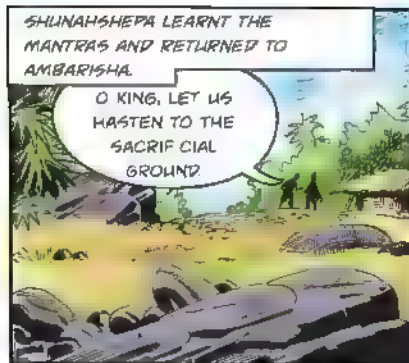
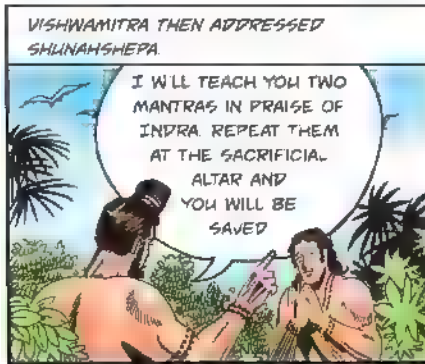


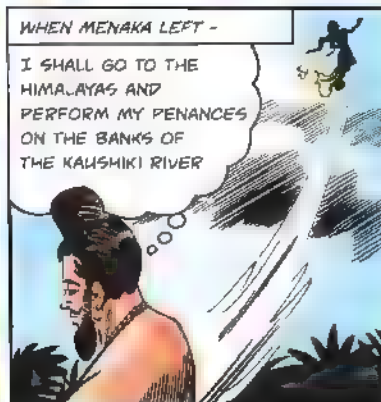
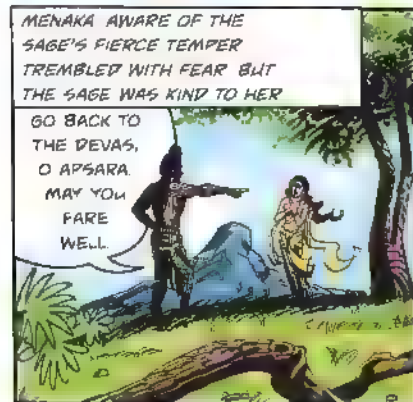
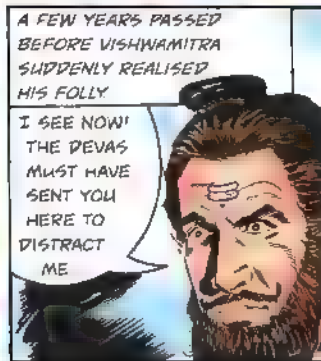
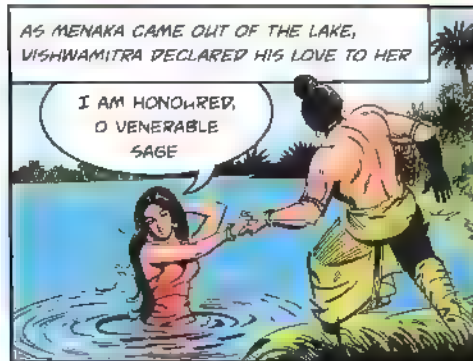
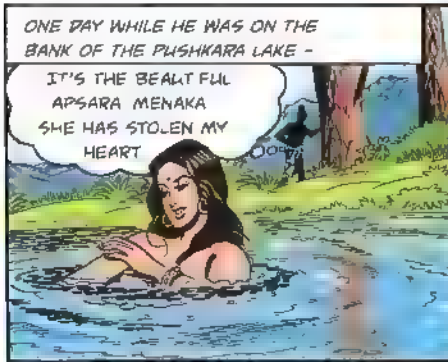
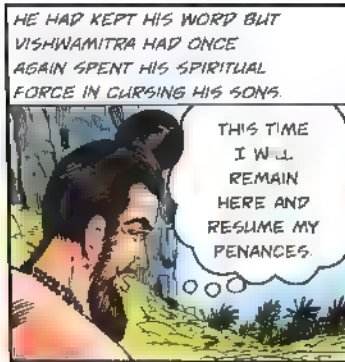




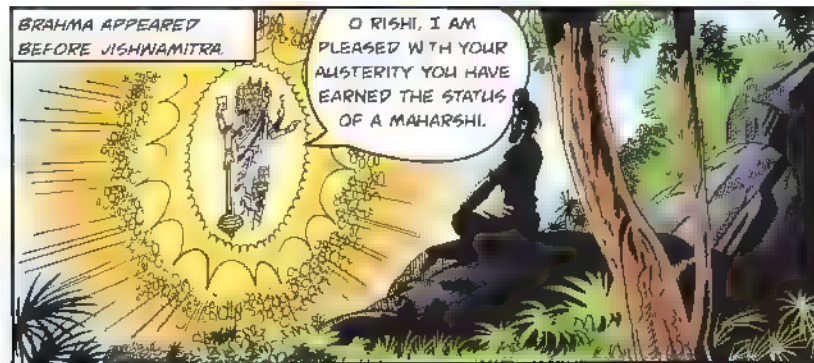
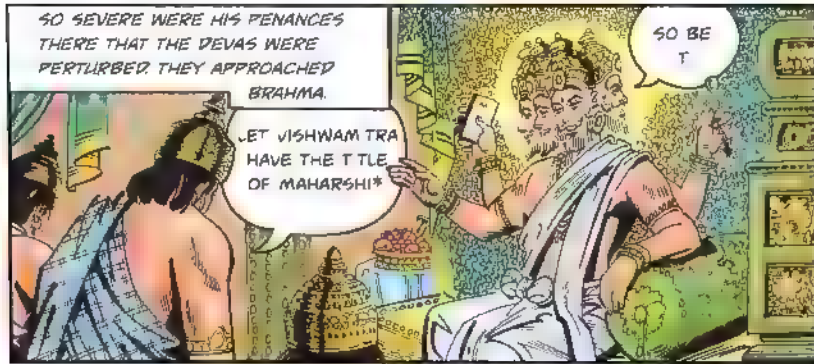








VISHWAMITRA



*A RISHI WHO HAS MASTERED KNOWLEDGE, HAS A VISION THAT INCLUDES THE WHOLE UNIVERSE AND YET IS PRECISE IN ACTION AND THOUGHT.

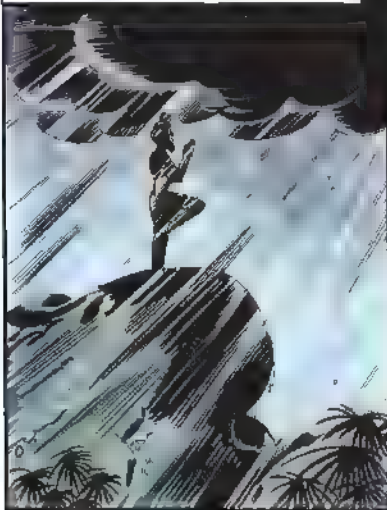
WHEN BRAHMA DEPARTED,
VISHWAMITRA INTENSIFIED HIS
AUSTERITIES.



IN SUMMER HE STOOD ON ONE FOOT
IN THE MIDDLE OF FIVE BLAZING
FIRES, LIVING ONLY ON AIR

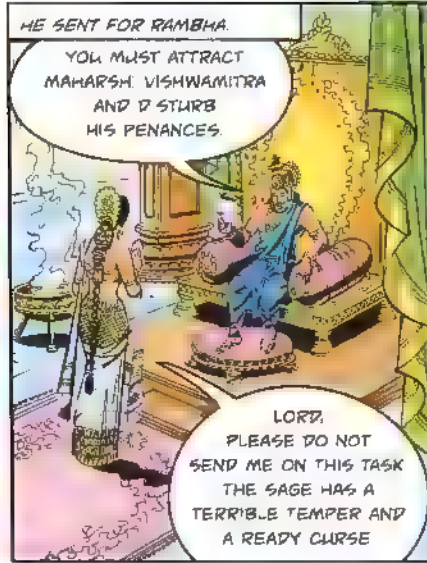
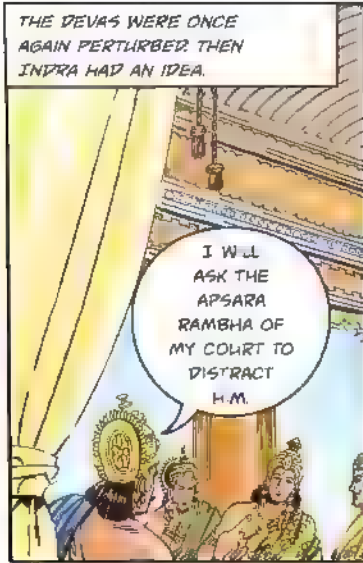


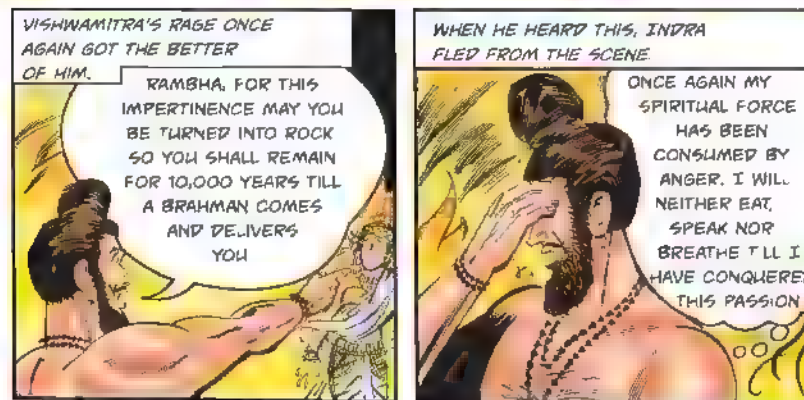
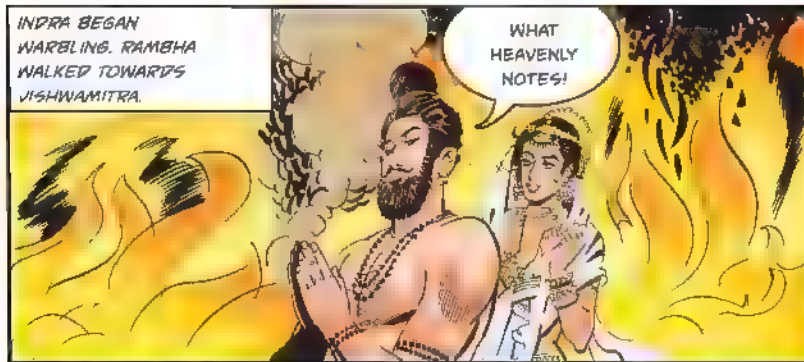
THROUGH THE RAINY SEASON
HE CONTINUED STANDING

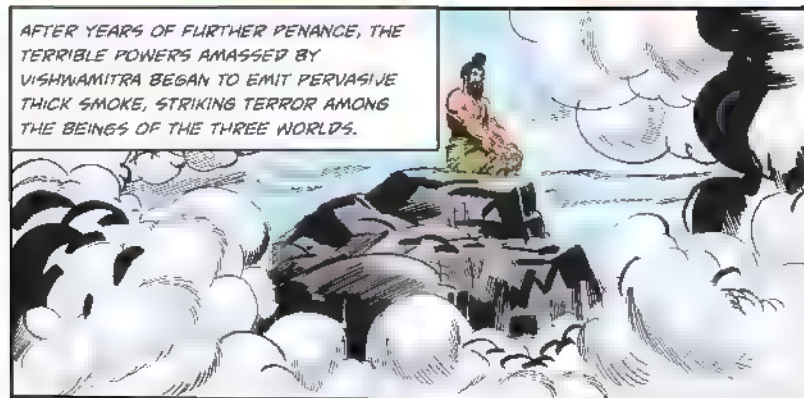
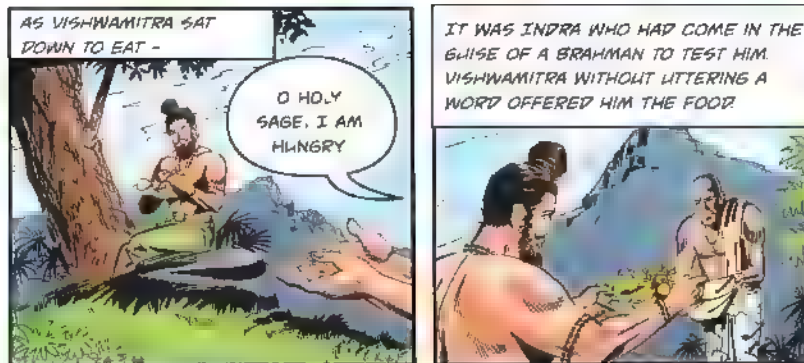


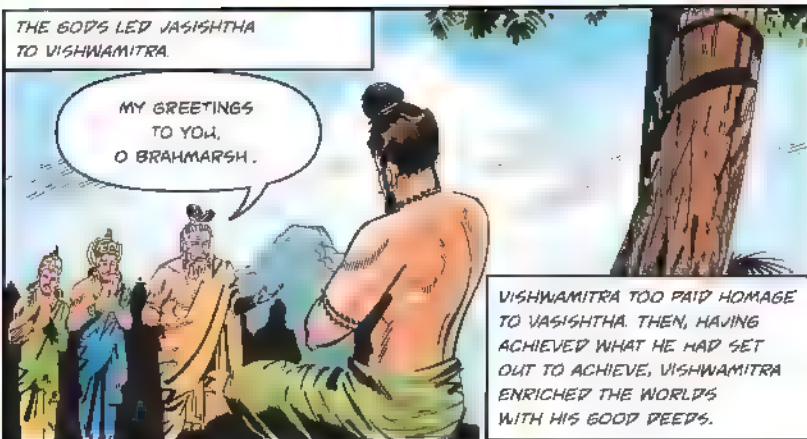
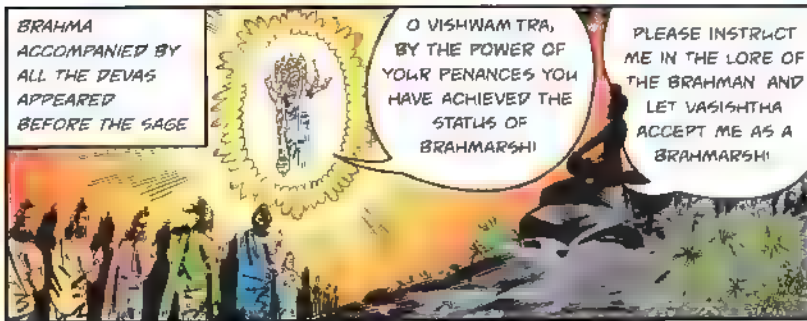
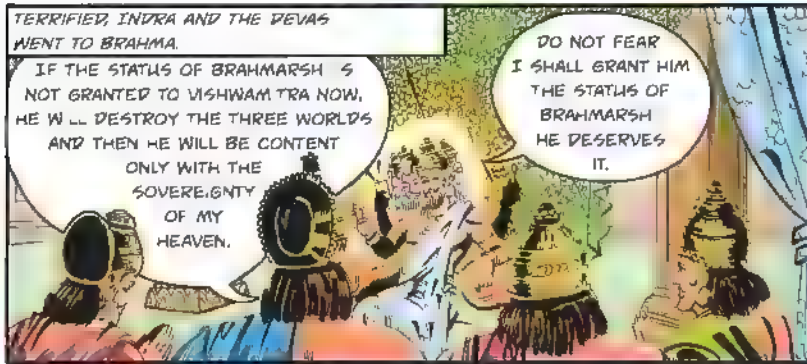
AND IN WINTER HE STOOD
IN THE MIDDLE OF A
COLD STREAM











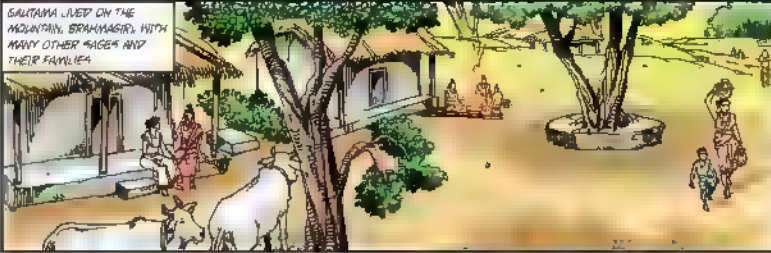
GAUTAMA AND AHALYA

GAUTAMA IS A DESCENDANT OF SAGE ANDHARA,
ONE OF THE MIND-BORN SONS OF BRAHMA



GAUTAMA IS ONE OF
THE SAPTARISHI FOR THE
UNIVERSAL MANVAHANTARA

GAUTAMA LIVED ON THE
MOUNTAIN, BRAHMAHARA, WITH
MANY OTHER SAGES AND
THEIR FAMILIES



HE WAS MARRIED TO
AHALYA KNOWN FOR HER
BEAUTY AND GRACE



HE WAS A FIDEL
HUSBAND WHO HELPED
GAUTAMA IN CARRYING OUT
HIS DUTIES AS A SAGE

GAUTAMA WAS A VERY
HUMBLE PERSON

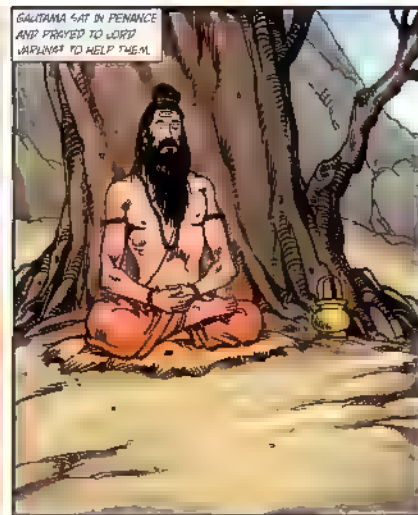


YOU ARE ONE OF THE
SAPTARISHI AND A NATURAL
LEADER OF THE SAGES
BUT YOU ARE NOT STRICT
WITH THEM

MY DUTY IS
TO SAFEGUARD
THE RISHIS
HERE, AHALYA

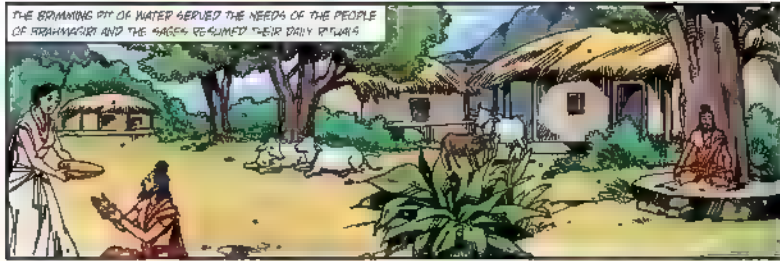


NOT TO WORRY
OVER THEM



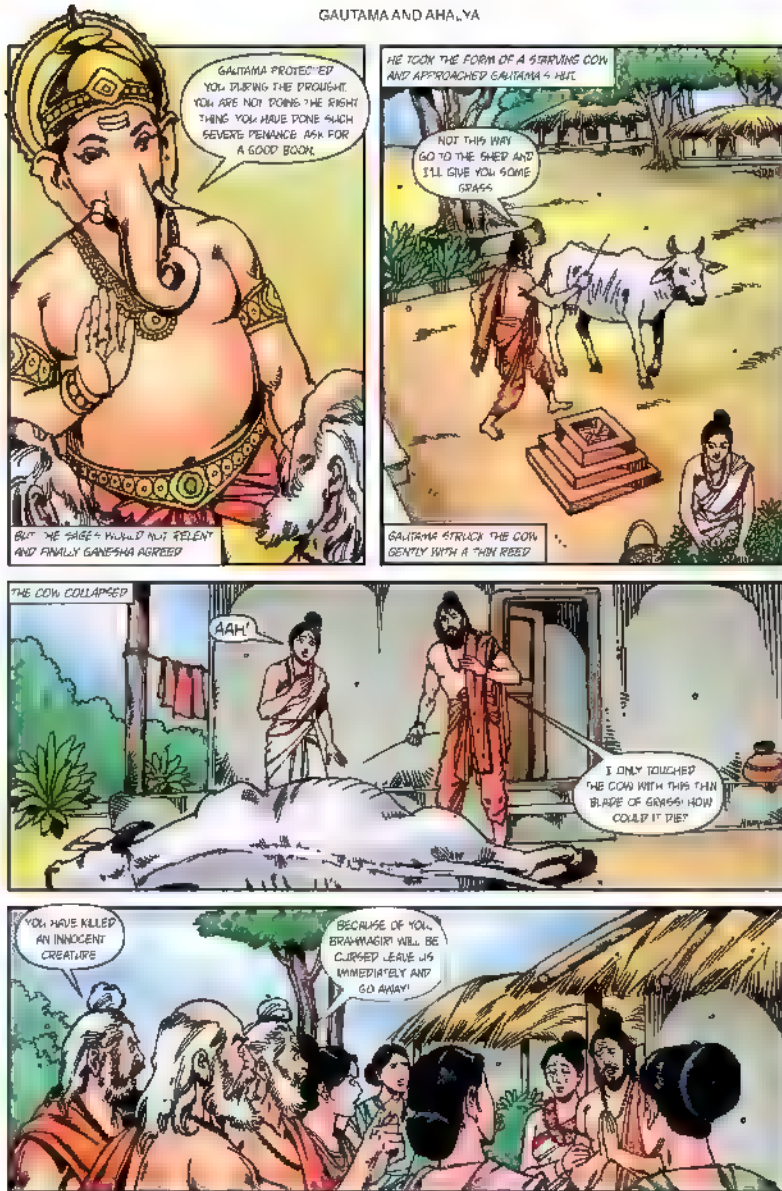
VARUNA IS THE GOD OF ALL FORMS OF WATER, PARTICULARLY THE OCEANS.



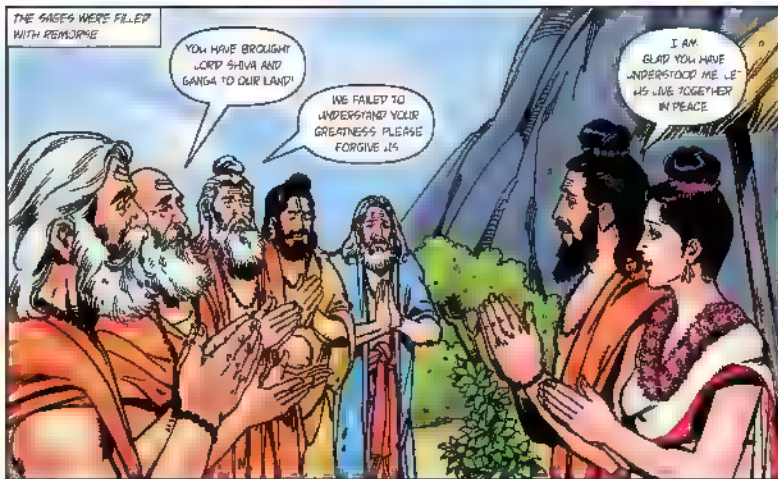
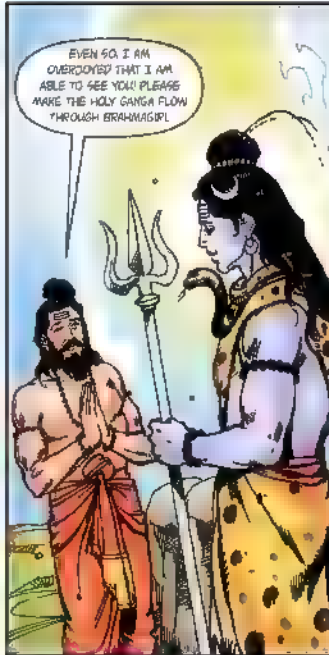




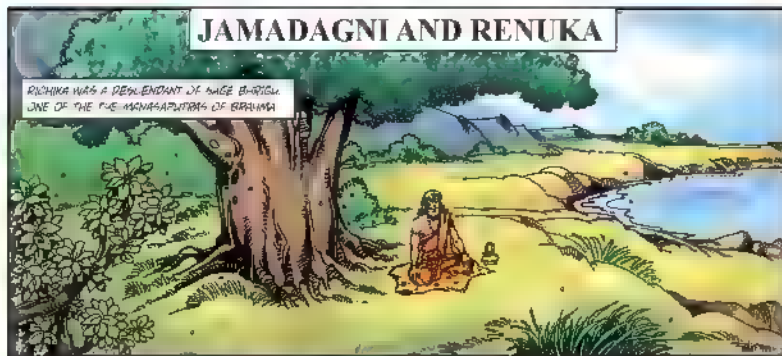


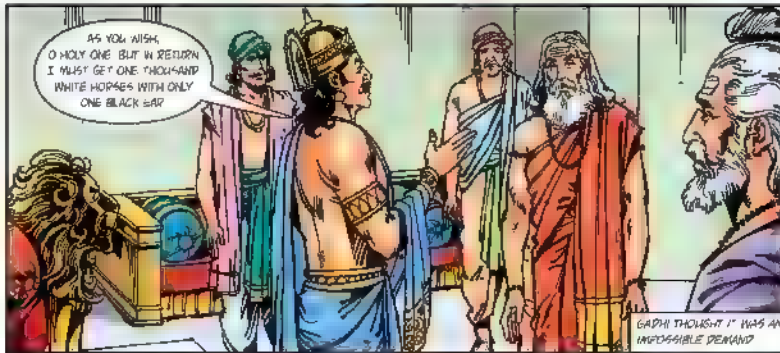


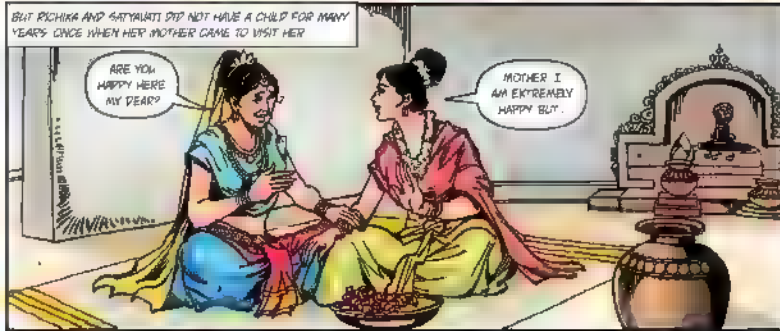


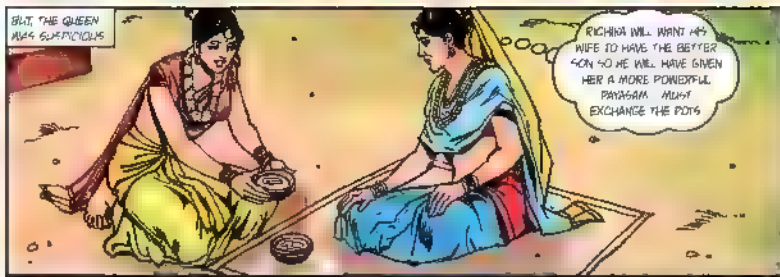


*GAUTAMI GANGA IS RIVER GODAVARI, ALSO CALLED PARSHVANI GANGA

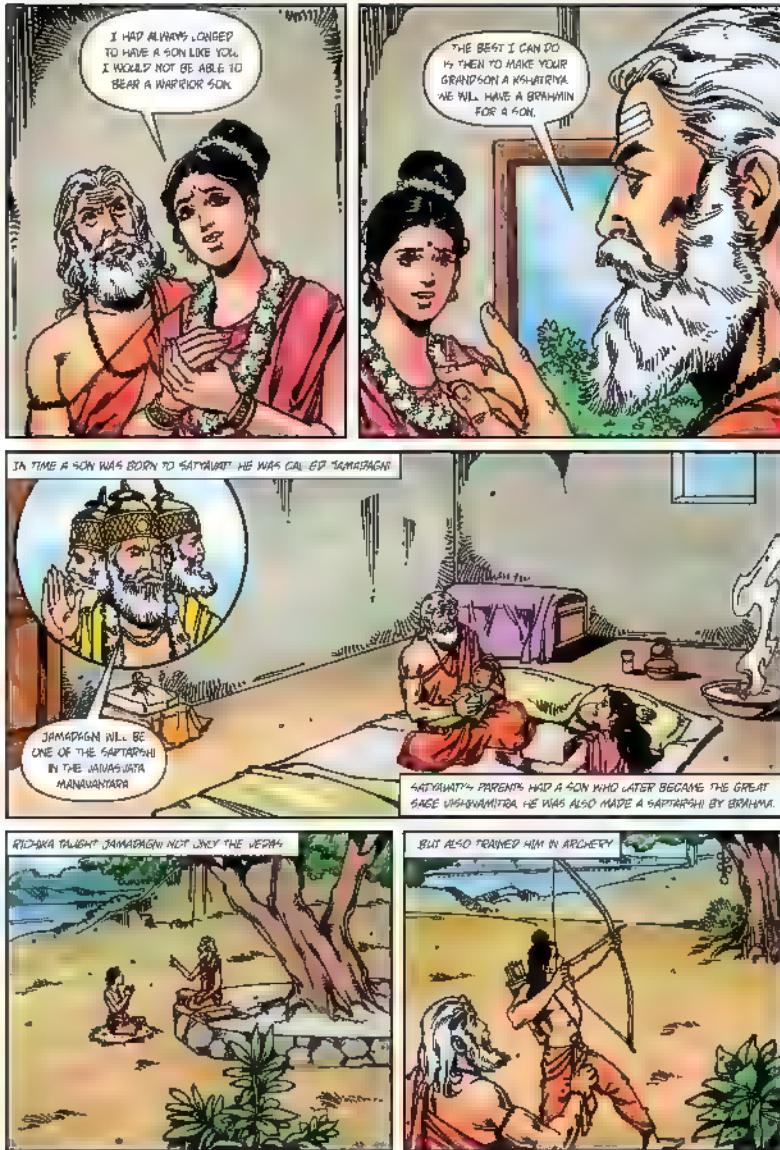




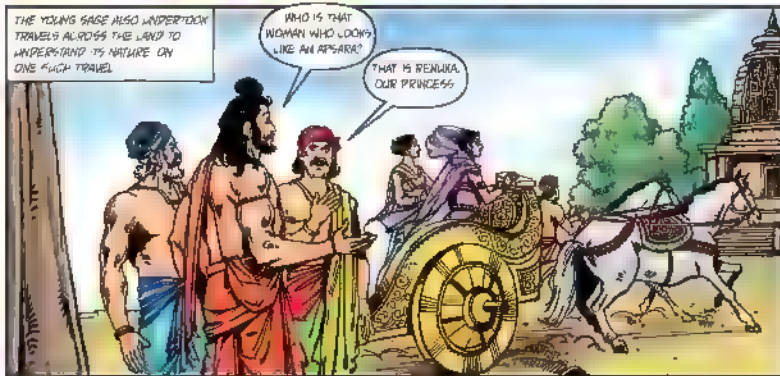


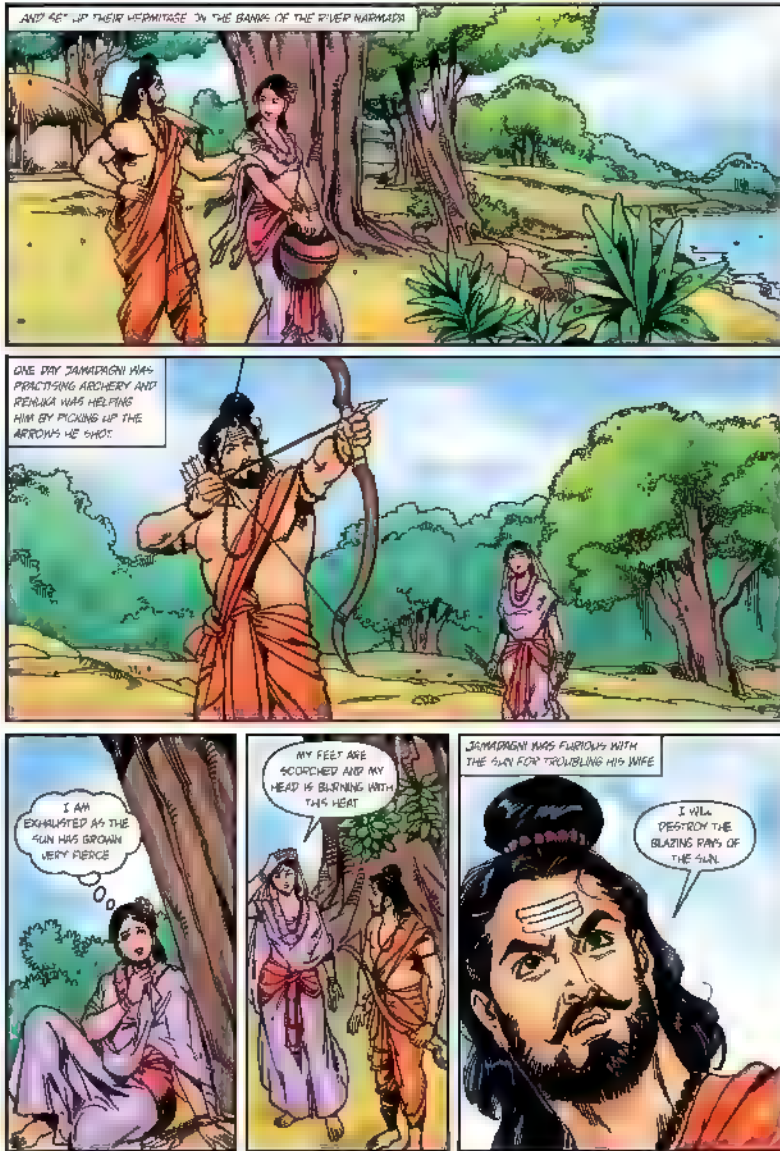


MILK AND RICE PUDDING

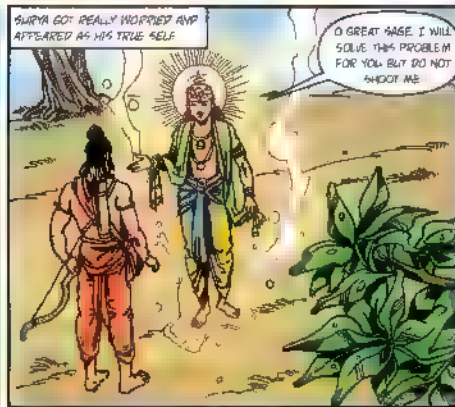


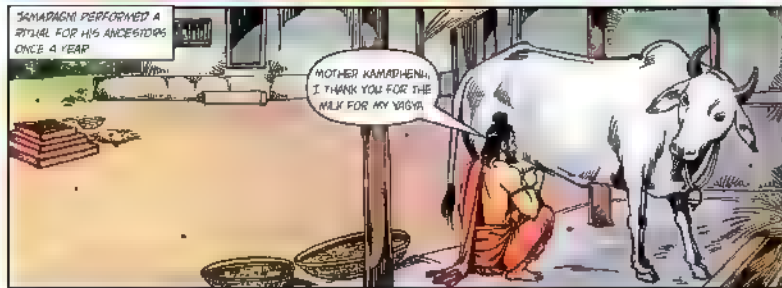
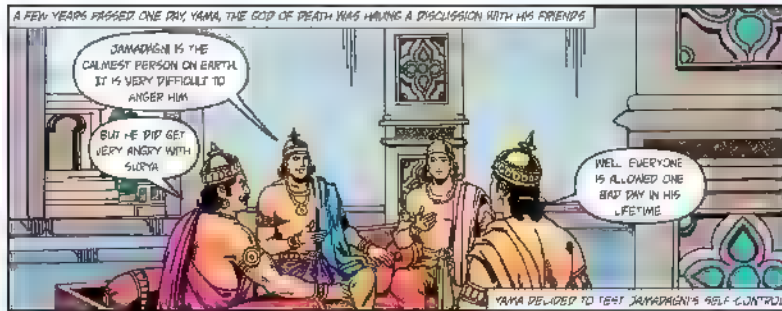
JAMADAGNI AND RENUKA





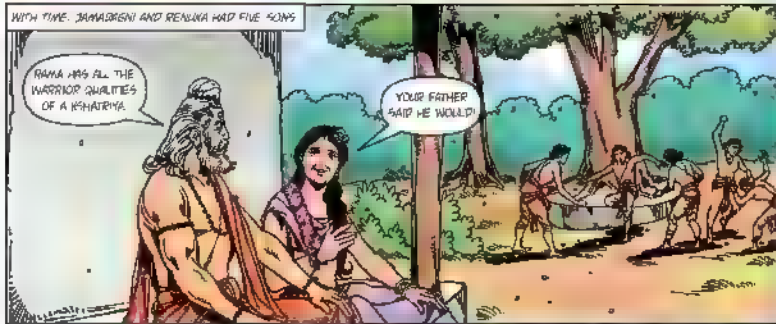
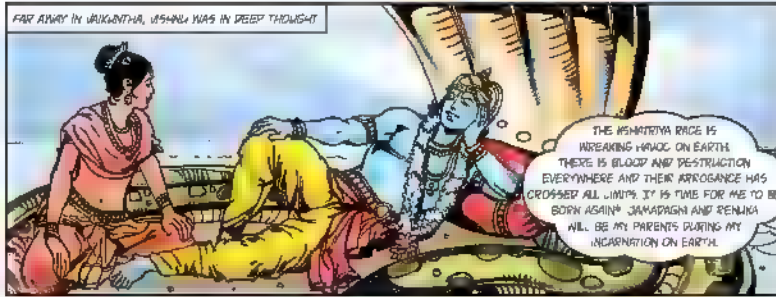




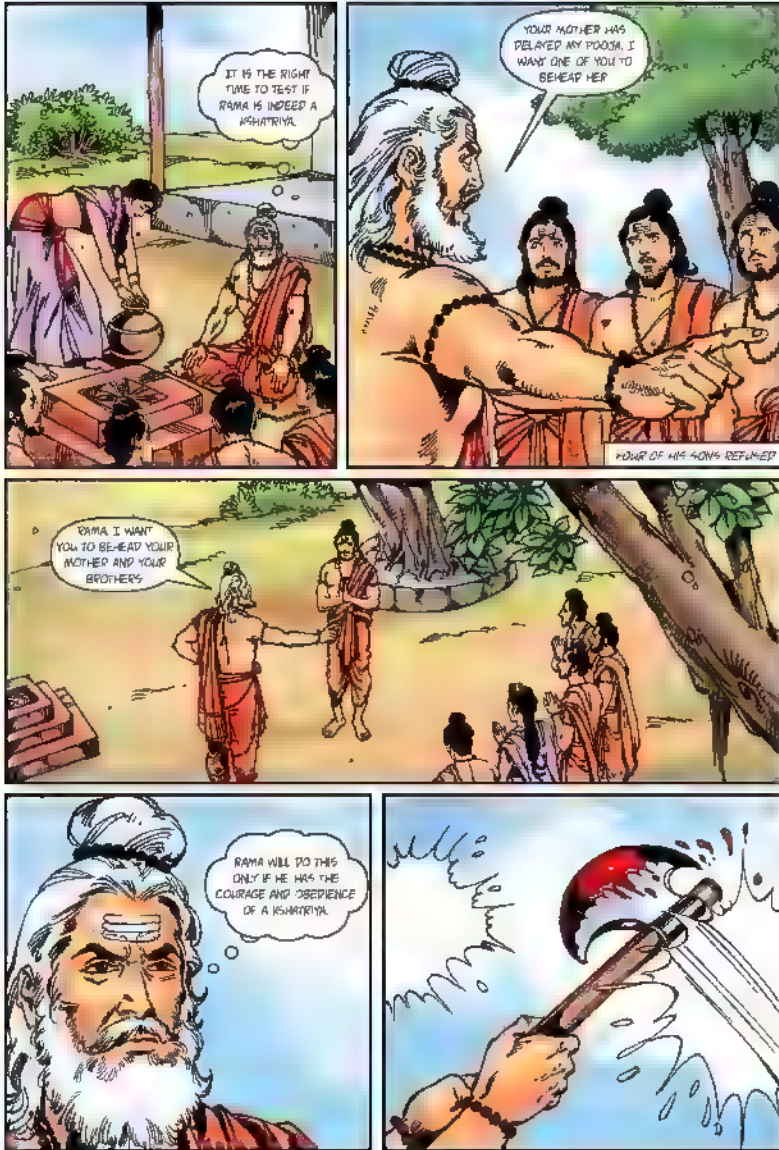


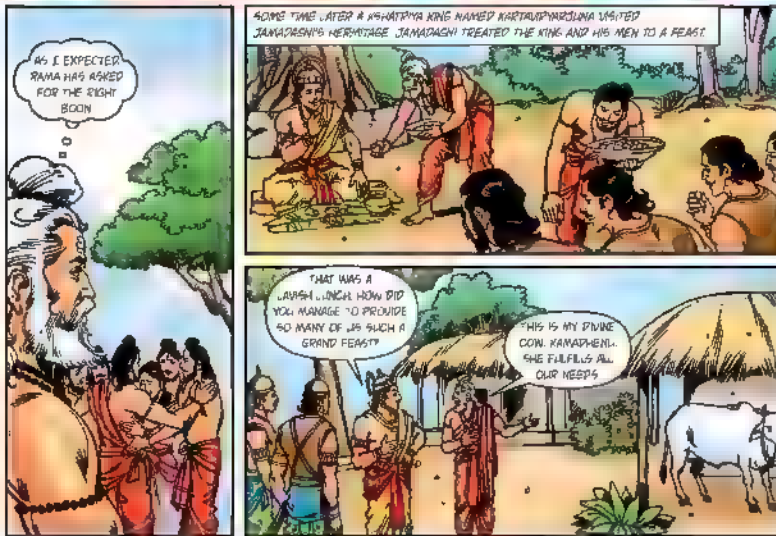
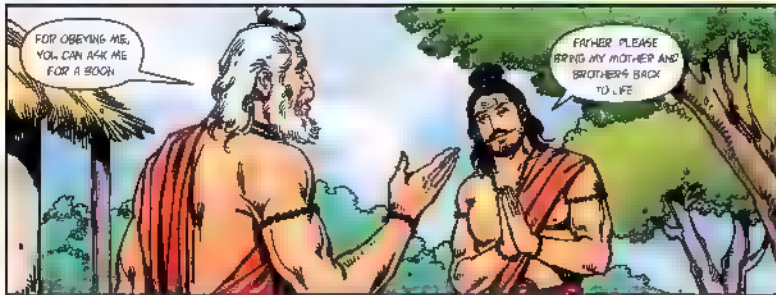


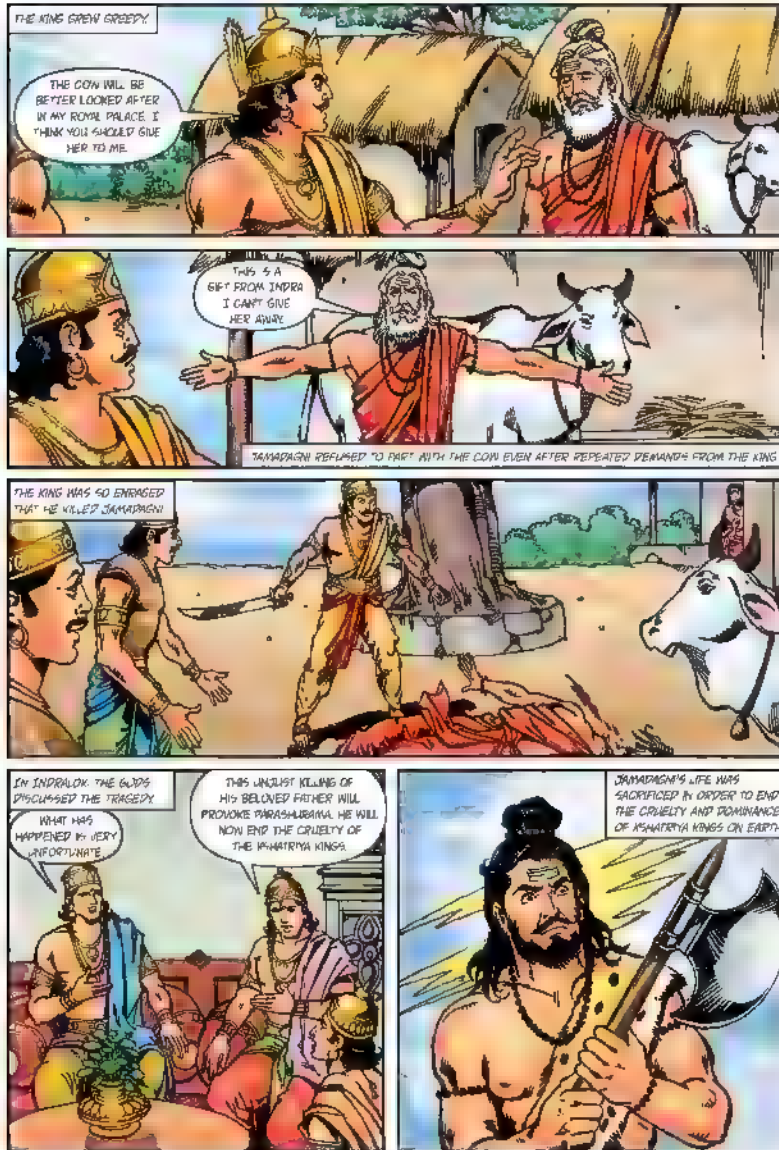
JAMADAGNI AND RENUKA



VISHNU GETS BORN AS A HUMAN ON EARTH EVERY
MANVANTARA TO DESTROY EVIL AND ESTABLISH THE GOOD



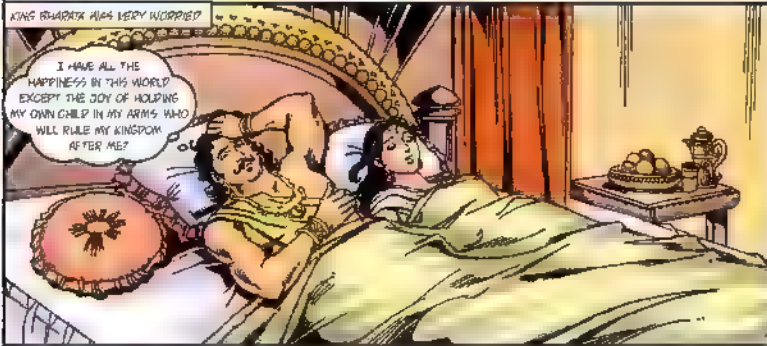




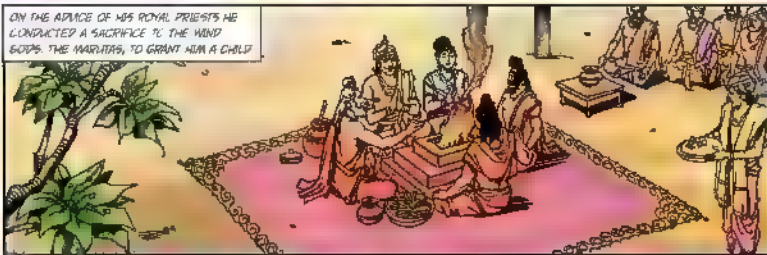
BHARADWAJA

KING BHARADWAJ WAS VERY WORRIED

I HAVE ALL THE HAPPINESS IN THIS WORLD EXCEPT THE JOY OF HOLDING MY OWN CHILD IN MY ARMS WHO WILL RULE MY KINGDOM AFTER ME?



ON THE ADVICE OF HIS ROYAL PRIESTS HE CONDUCTED A SACRIFICE TO THE HINDU GODS, THE MARUTAS, TO GRANT HIM A CHILD



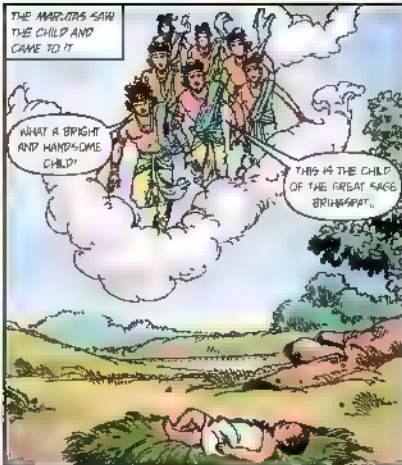
AT THE SAME TIME -



MAY YOU FIND SOMEONE WHO IS ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU

THE COUPLE LEFT THE NEW-BORN CHILD AND WENT AWAY

THE MARUTAS SAW THE CHILD AND CAME TO IT

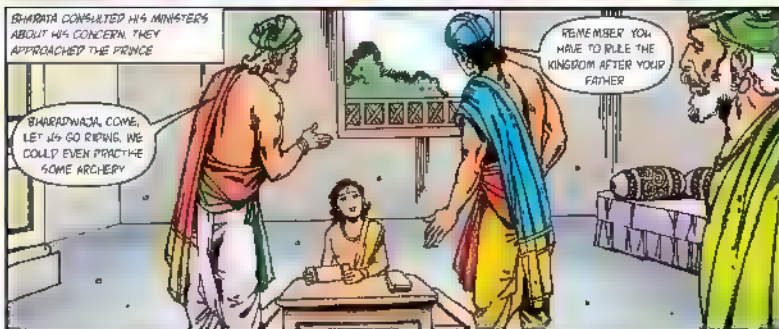
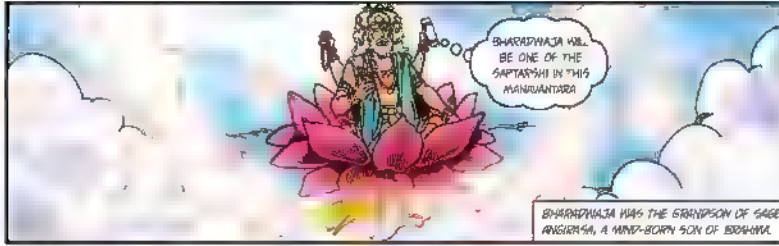


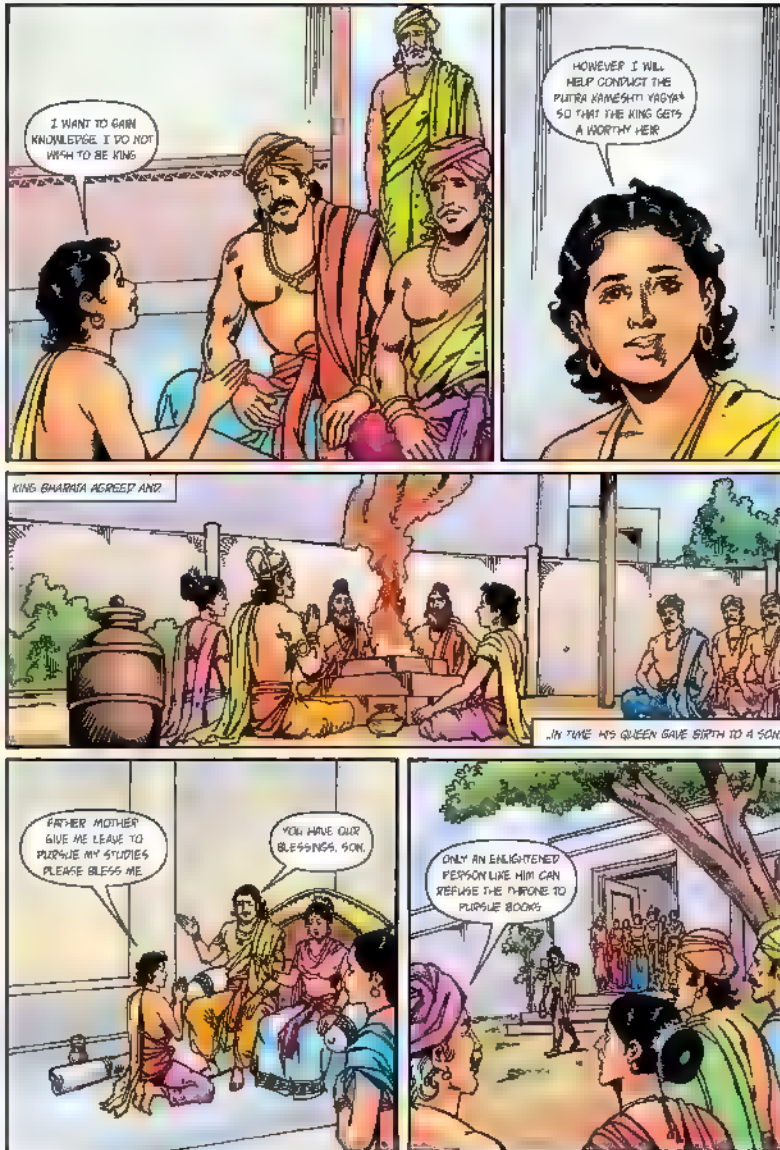
WHAT A BRIGHT AND HANDSOME CHILD!

THIS IS THE CHILD OF THE GREAT SAGE BRHARATI.

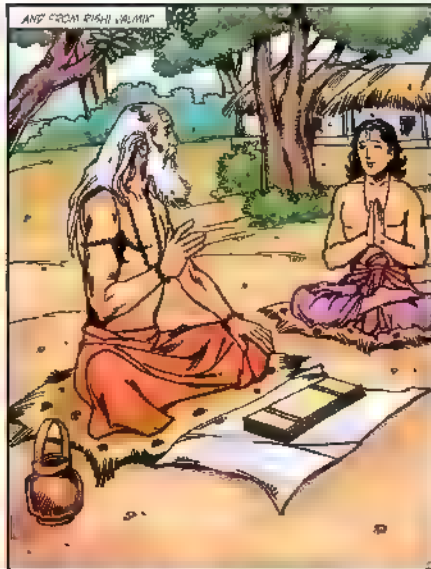


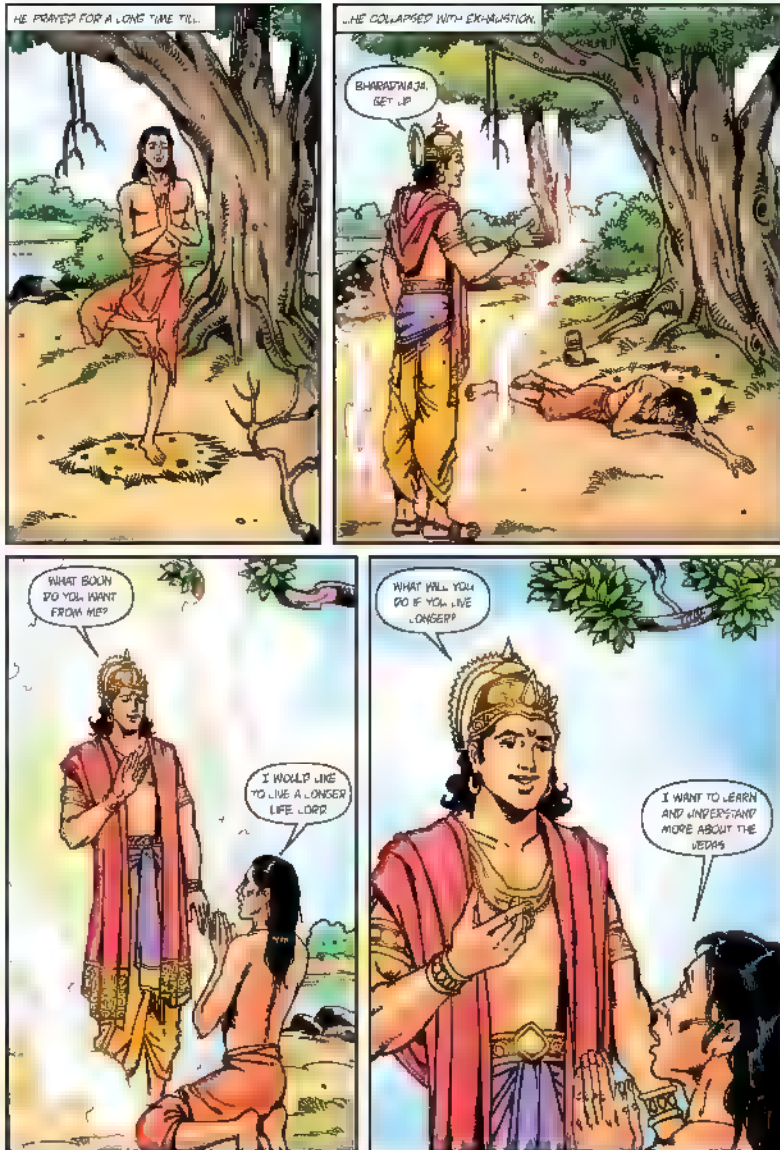
BHARADWAJA

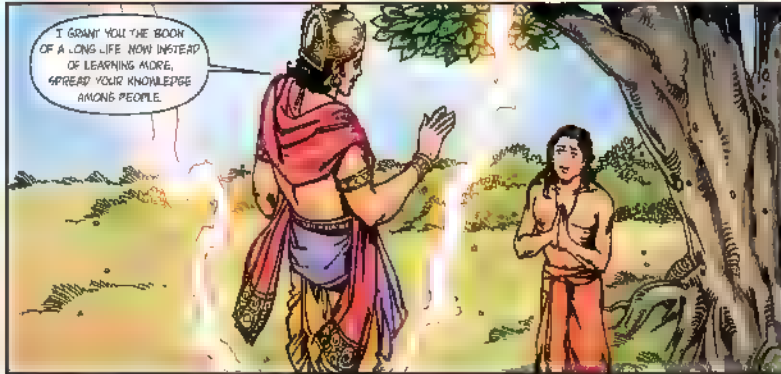
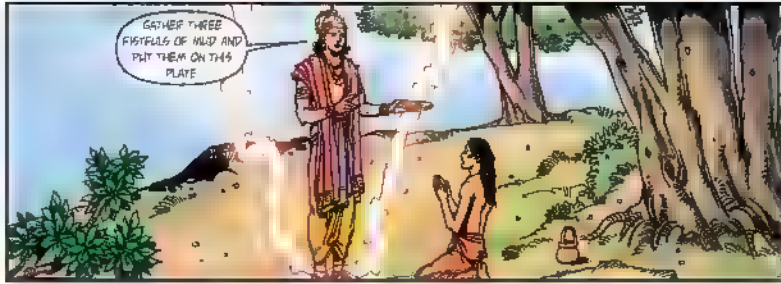


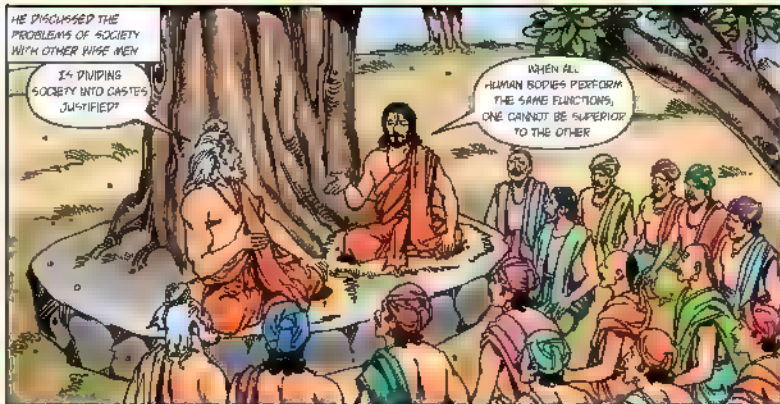
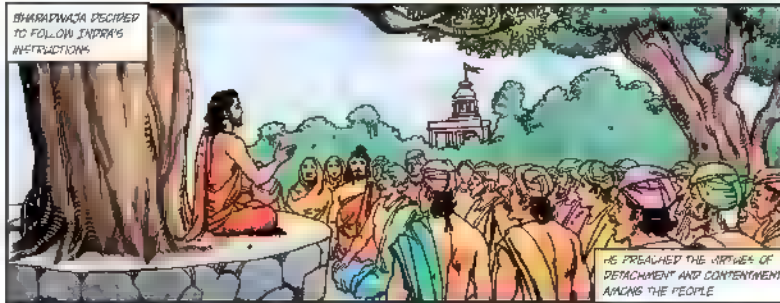


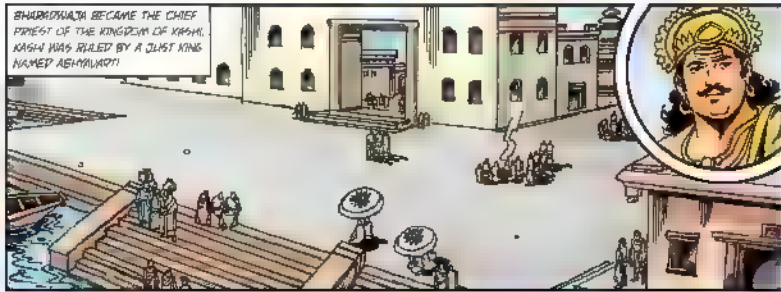
BHARADWAJA



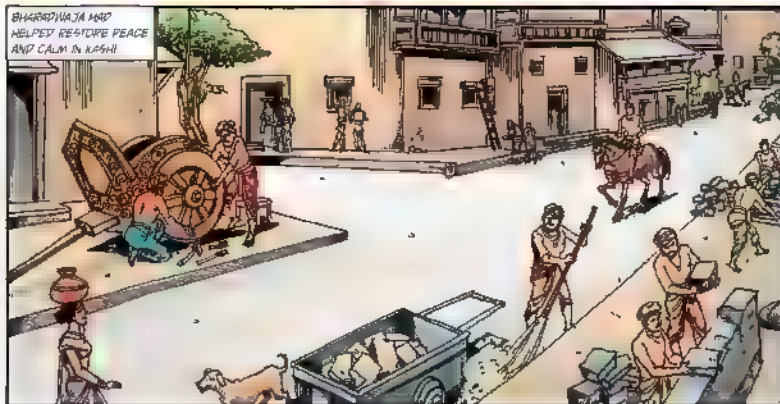
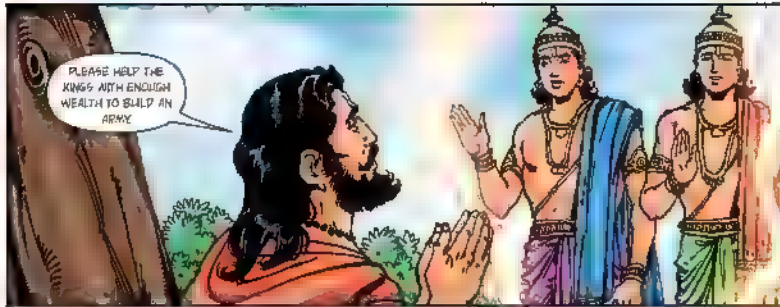




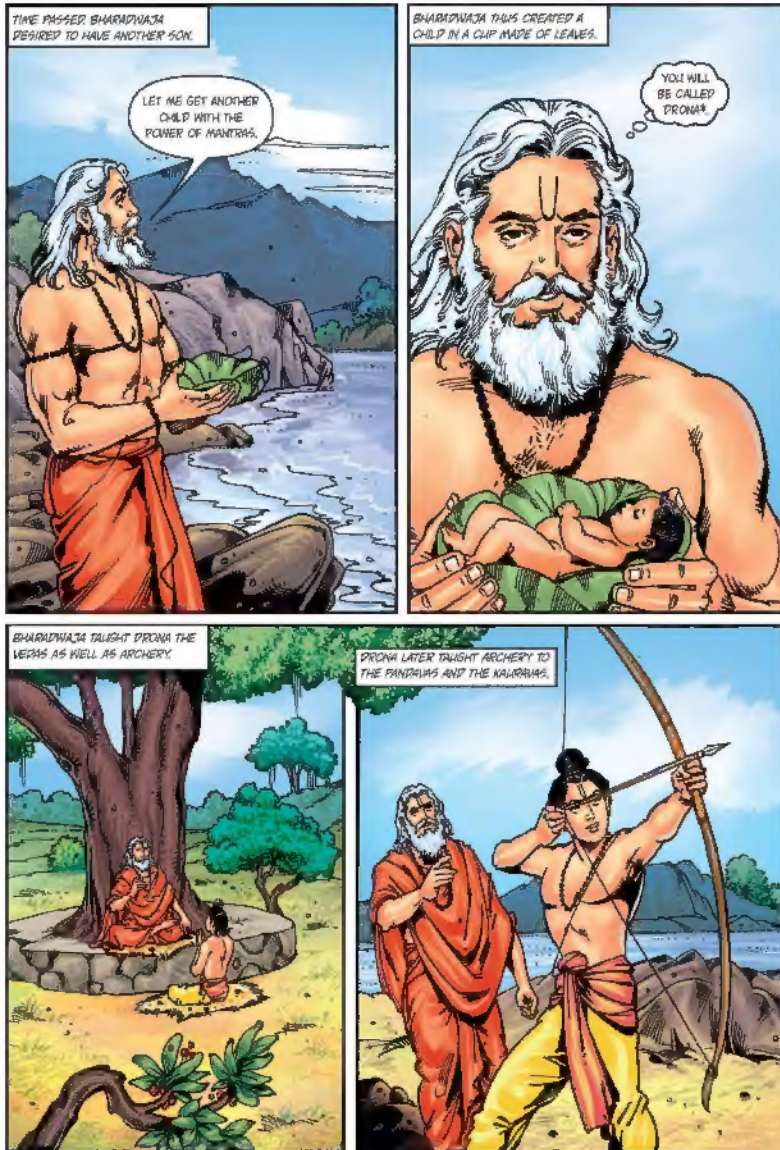




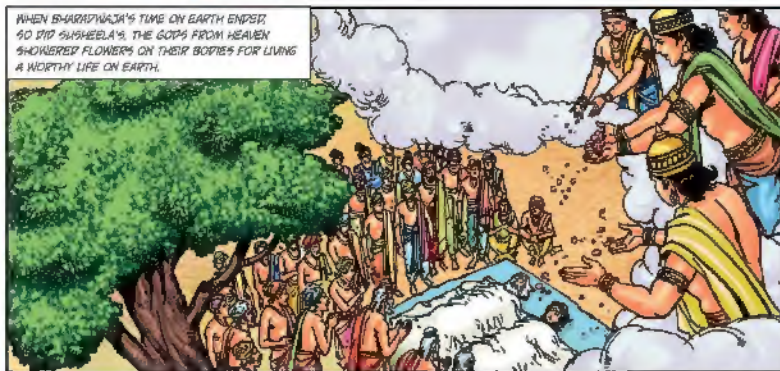
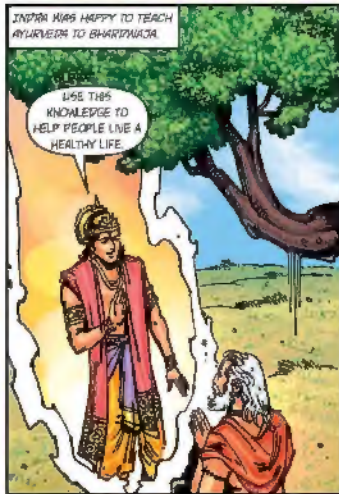








*PRONA MEANS A CUP MADE OF LEAVES.



SAPTARSHI

The Seven Supreme Sages

In Indian mythology the concept of time is measured in a manvantara. Each manvantara is allotted seven exceptional sages by Brahma, who represent supreme knowledge and righteousness.

Amar Chitra Katha has captured stories from the inspiring and remarkable lives of the seven sages chosen to represent the current manvantara.

Atri, the first of the Saptarshis, is a mindborn son of Brahma. So enduring was his life and presence, that he played a role in the events of The Ramayana as well as The Mahabharata.

Vasishtha was the voice of wisdom and honesty during the time he spent advising the kings of the Solar dynasty. The mutual respect he shared with his admirable wife, Arundhati, was reflected in their exemplary marriage.

Tasked by Brahma to populate the Earth, Kashyapa is considered the father of all living beings. The origin of all creatures can be traced back to Kashyapa and his wives.

The proud King Kaushika's troubled relationship with Sage Vasishtha gave rise to his transformation into the accomplished sage, Vishwamitra.

Gautama and his wife, Ahalya, overcame the mistrust and insults of the people of Brahmagiri and brought Ganga to the parched land.

Jamadagni, who was a proficient student of the Vedas, was chosen by Vishnu to be his father during his avatar as Parashurama.

Bharadwaja's thirst of knowledge was so great that he prayed to Indra for a long life so he had enough time to learn. With Indra's blessing he spread the knowledge he gained, around the world.

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